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BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

SUMMONS TO ATTEND THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

TO: THE LORD MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND 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 Monday, 1st July, 2019, immediately following the conclusion of the special meeting scheduled for 5.30 p.m., for the transaction of the following business:

1. Summons
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of the Council (Pages 1 - 20)
5. Official Announcements
6. Requests to Address the Council
 - a) Save Our Sunflower Campaign

To consider a request from Mr. J. Whyte Jnr. to address the Council in relation to the motion on the Save Our Sunflower Campaign being proposed by Councillor D. Baker.
 - b) Build Homes Now

To consider a request from Ms. E. Morris, Build Homes Now, to allow a deputation to address the Council in relation to the motion on Social Housing, which was passed by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 13th November, 2018.
7. Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Pages 21 - 106)
8. People and Communities Committee (Pages 107 - 150)
 - a) Traffic Regulation Order (Northern Ireland) 2019

To pass a resolution to make a Belfast City Council Traffic Regulation Order (Northern Ireland) 2019, covering those streets set out in pages C1321 to C1323 of the minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 4th June, 2019, and to come into effect on 1st July, 2019.
9. City Growth and Regeneration Committee (Pages 151 - 204)
10. Licensing Committee (Pages 205 - 220)

11. Planning Committee (Pages 221 - 246)

12. Brexit Committee (Pages 247 - 256)

13. Notices of Motion

a) Homeless Status

Proposed by Councillor Hargey,
Seconded by Councillor Murphy,

“This Council commends the #FDANODELAY campaign and recognises that people living in hostels and other temporary/emergency accommodation across our society are homeless and deserve to be legally recognised as such by having Full Duty Applicant status awarded.

The Council calls on the NIHE Chief Executive to respond, outlining what measures the NIHE will now take to accurately audit the extent of the problem regarding homeless people who are not recognised as such and what steps will be taken to remedy these oversights.”

(To be debated by the Council)

b) TV Licences for Over 75s

Proposed by Councillor Groves,
Seconded by Councillor S. Baker,

“This Council notes with serious concern the plans that the British Broadcasting Corporation has announced relating to the means testing of the provision of TV licensing for the over-75s.

The Council agrees to request the BBC to immediately cease these plans and agrees also that the Mayor of Belfast convene a meeting with BBC senior officials and the Council’s Reference Group on Older People to hear at first hand the impact that this decision will have on our most valued and respected Citizens of Belfast.”

(To be debated by the Council)

c) Welfare Mitigation Schemes

Proposed by Councillor Canavan,
Seconded by Councillor Black,

“This Council recognises that mitigation packages have provided vital support to the most vulnerable members of our society and should continue to be provided as Tory austerity measures continue to impact.

The Council notes with deep concern the range of reports published recently which highlight the serious risk of greater hardship for many within our community, if welfare mitigations do not continue beyond March 2020. These reports include:

- Welfare Reform: Mitigations on a Cliff Edge
- Cliff Edge Coalition NI
- NIAO: Welfare Reforms in NI

The Council calls on all parties to support the need to continue welfare mitigations beyond March 2020 and agrees to write to the Department for Communities calling for it to take all steps necessary to ensure that mitigations schemes will continue to help the most vulnerable in our community.”

(To be debated by the Council)

d) Save Our Sunflower Campaign

Proposed by Councillor D. Baker,
Seconded by Councillor Carson,

“This Council recognises the efforts of the Anthony Nolan and DKMS charities to raise awareness, through the use of media, publications and other avenues, of blood cancer and the urgent need to get more people on the stem cell donation register.

The Council agrees to work with the Save our Sunflower campaign group and charities to further the goal of increased registration.”

(To be debated by the Council)

e) Voting Rights for Irish Citizens in Presidential Elections

Proposed by Councillor de Faoite,
Seconded by Councillor Heading,

“This Council:

- recognises the unique ability of people living in Northern Ireland to hold citizenship of Britain, Ireland or both, as a result of the Good Friday Agreement;
- welcomes the announcement from An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar TD and the Irish Government of their intent to hold a Referendum on the right of all Irish Citizens to take part in the election of Uachtarán na hÉireann, the President of Ireland; and
- believes that this is an important opportunity to expand the democratic participation of people across Northern Ireland in the election of the Irish Head of State.”

(To be debated by the Council)

f) Domestic Violence

Proposed by Councillor M. Kelly,
Seconded by Councillor Nicholl,

“This Council is saddened at the levels of domestic violence in Belfast and recognises that this manifests in many different forms, including emotional and economic abuse.

Belfast needs to become a city that has zero tolerance towards domestic violence or abuse – a “Safe City” which is proactive in supporting victims of domestic violence and challenging perpetrators. A Safe City recognises that domestic violence impacts upon many residents, regardless of age, religion, ethnic or cultural background.

This Council pledges to build on the work already achieved by engaging with relevant partners to support victims of domestic abuse and challenge perpetrators and to update the Belfast City Council Domestic Violence Strategy.”

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

g) Water Refill Points

Proposed by Councillor McMullan,
Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds),

“This Council recognises the over reliance on single use plastic water bottles. It notes innovative solutions to tackle this issue and support sustainable living, for example, the water refill stations recently installed by Mayo County Council.

The Council agrees to the installation of water bottle refill stations across the Council Estate. This aims to help encourage a growing culture of using personal, reusable bottles to tackle single-use plastic use.”

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

h) Webcasting of Committee Meetings

Proposed by Councillor Nicholl,
Seconded by Councillor Harvey,

“This council agrees to introduce webcasting of all Committee meetings in order to increase openness and transparency.”

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

i) Centenary of the Foundation of Northern Ireland

Proposed by Councillor Dorrian,
Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson,

“This Council notes the centenary of the foundation of Northern Ireland in 2021, the commitment to celebrate this as part of the Decade of Centenaries programme and the pivotal role that Belfast City Hall played in the establishment of its political institutions.

The Council agrees that a significant programme is developed by the Council to celebrate, to educate and to fully examine the different perspectives on its creation and to recognise the role of the City Hall.”

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

j) Abortion Imagery

Proposed by Councillor Groogan,
Seconded by Councillor Ferguson,

"This Council notes the ambition set out in the Belfast Agenda that Belfast will be a city that is welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive for all. The public display of graphic abortion imagery in our City centre conflicts with this ambition, due to the distress that it can cause to people who have suffered miscarriage.

The Council agrees to investigate whether the display of such signs can be regulated lawfully either by the Council or another body to ensure those who have suffered miscarriages can continue to use and enjoy our City centre without fear of being re-traumatised."

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

k) Glyphosate-Based Weedkiller

Proposed by Councillor Ferguson,
Seconded by Councillor Michael Collins,

"This Council recognises the dangers associated with the use of glyphosate-based weedkillers, including the World Health Organisation's warning about carcinogenic side effects and the damaging impact on the environment and biodiversity.

The Council notes that other councils and government agencies have introduced bans across the world and agrees to immediately investigate and implement the use of safer weedkilling methods in order to protect Council staff, the general public, and local flora and fauna."

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

l) Air Quality in Belfast

Proposed by Councillor O'Hara,
Seconded by Councillor Kyle,

"This Council notes that the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) monitoring of Air Quality in Belfast has identified breaches of the Air Quality legal limits, alongside the Council's own monitoring of and the data collected by Greens across the City.

Poor Air Quality reduces life expectancy, increases incidents of respiratory conditions, rates of lung cancers, strokes and asthma. These are more prevalent amongst older people, younger people and vulnerable groups. In addition, this disproportionately impacts inner city and working class communities.

In view of these issues and in support of all 5 objectives of the Belfast Agenda, particularly outcome 5 to make 'Belfast a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally sustainable City', the Council agrees to engage formally with DAERA and the Department for Infrastructure on the areas of concern and to produce reports on:

- Enhancing monitoring and reporting of air pollution, including recommended limits in line with the more stringent World Health Organisation Standards; and
- Introducing a Clean Air Zone in Belfast, in line with UK Government Guidance."

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

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



Chief Executive

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Council

ANNUAL MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Tuesday, 21st May, 2019
at 6.00 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 Sandford); Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, de Faoite, Donnelly, Dorrian, Ferguson, Finucane, Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Groogan, Groves, Haire, Hanvey, Heading, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Kingston, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Magee, McAllister, McAteer, McCoubrey, McCusker, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, McReynolds, Mulholland, Murphy, Newton, Nicholl, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Rodgers, Smyth, Spence, Verner, Walsh and Whyte.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Copeland and Magennis.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Minutes of the Council

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

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 29th April be taken as read and signed as correct.

Official Announcements

The Lord Mayor referred to the fact that a number of Councillors had not been re-elected to the Council and she thanked them for the contribution which they had made to the Council and their constituents during their period of service. She also took the

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

opportunity to congratulate and welcome the new Councillors who had recently been elected and stated that she looked forward to working with them during the Council term.

The Council's attention was drawn to the fact that both Mr. Mark McBride, Head of Finance and Performance, and Mr. Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects, would be retiring from the Council in the near future. The Council noted the significant contribution that both officers had made to the Council during their time in the Council and wished them well in their retirement.

Councillor Sandford referred to the recent birth of Archie Harrison Mountbatten-Windsor, son of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, and requested that the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the City, convey congratulations to the Royal couple on the occasion.

At the request of Councillor Spence, the Council extended its best wishes to Brantwood Football Club on winning the Crawford Cup and Crusaders Football Club on winning the Irish Cup.

Requests to Film Proceedings

The Chief Executive reported that requests had been received from a number of broadcasting companies to film the installation of the Lord Mayor and the Deputy Lord Mayor.

The Council approved the requests.

Adoption of Standing Orders for the New Council

The Chief Executive reminded the Council that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 12th April, had agreed several changes to the Standing Orders that had applied in the previous Council Term. These changes had been ratified by the Council at its meeting on 29th April.

In accordance with Standing Order 64, the Council was required to confirm the changes to Standing Orders.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Ferguson,

That the decision of the Council of 29th April to amend Standing Order 13(f) be rejected and accordingly the Council agrees that the previous wording be retained, that is:

“if the subject matter of any motion of which notice has been given falls within the remit of any Committee it shall, upon being proposed and seconded, stand referred without discussion to that Committee, or to such other Committee as the Council may determine, for consideration and report, subject to the provision that the Lord Mayor may, due to the urgency

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

of the matter, allow it to be discussed at the Council meeting rather than it being referred to a Committee”.

On a recorded vote, twenty-five Members voted for the amendment and sixteen against, with sixteen no votes, and it was declared carried.

<u>For 25</u>	<u>Against 16</u>	<u>No Vote 16</u>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McDonough-Brown); Councillors Matt Collins, Michael Collins, de Faoite, Ferguson, Flynn, Groogan, Hanvey, Heading, Howard, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, Kyle, Long, Lyons, McAllister, McCusker, McKeown, McMullan, McReynolds, Mulholland, Nicholl, O’Hara, Smyth and White.	The High Sheriff (Councillor Sandford); Councillors Brooks, Bunting, Cobain, Dorrian, Graham, Haire, Hussey, T. Kelly, Kingston, McCoubrey, Newton, Pankhurst, Rodgers, Spence and Verner.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Hargey); Councillors D. Baker, Beattie, Black, Canavan, Carson, Corr, Donnelly, Finucane, Garrett, Groves, Magee, McAteer, McLaughlin, Murphy and Walsh.

Subject to the aforementioned amendment, the Council agreed to adopt the Standing Orders for the Council Term 2019-23.

Appointment of Positions of Responsibility for 2019/2023

The Chief Executive drew the Council’s attention to a report which identified the Political Parties that had been selected by the Nominating Officer of each Political Party to hold the following Positions of Responsibility during the four year Council term:

Position	Year 1	Year 2	Year3	Year 4
Lord Mayor	SF	DUP	ALL	SF
Deputy Lord Mayor	ALL	SDLP	DUP	ALL
Chairperson Strategic Policy and Resources Committee	DUP	SF	GREEN	ALL
Deputy Chairperson Strategic Policy and Resources Committee	ALL	DUP	SF	SDLP
Chairperson of City Growth and Regeneration Committee	SF	DUP	SF	SF

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

Deputy Chairperson City Growth and Regeneration Committee	ALL	SF	DUP	DUP
Chairperson People and Communities Committee	PBPA	SF	DUP	ALL
Deputy Chairperson People and Communities Committee	PUP	UUP	GREEN	DUP
Chairperson Planning Committee	SF	DUP	SF	SDLP
Deputy Chairperson Planning Committee	DUP	SDLP	ALL	SF
Chairperson Licensing Committee	SF	SF	SF	PBPA
Deputy Chairperson Licensing Committee	DUP	PBPA	UUP	DUP
Chairperson Waterfront and Ulster Hall	ALL	DUP	SF	ALL
Deputy Chairperson Waterfront and Ulster Hall	GREEN	PUP	DUP	DUP
Chairperson Brexit Committee	SDLP	GREEN	SF	SF
Deputy Chairperson Brexit Committee	SF	SF	SDLP	SDLP

Outside Bodies	Position1	Position2	Position3
arc21	DUP	SF	PBPA
Partnership Panel	SF		
NI Housing Council	ALL		
Reserve Forces and Cadets Assoc.	DUP		

Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership Membership		
SF	SF	SF
DUP	DUP	ALL
ALL	SDLP	GREEN

Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships Memberships				
	North	South	East	West
Position 1	SF	SF	SF	SF

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

Position 2	DUP	DUP	DUP	DUP
Position 3	ALL	ALL	ALL	ALL
Position 4	DUP	SF	DUP	SF
Position 5	SF	SDLP	UUP	PBPA
Position 6	GREEN	GREEN	PUP	SDLP

The Council agreed to appoint the Positions of Responsibility for the four year Council term, as set out above.

Year One Positions of Responsibility - 2019/2020

The Chief Executive drew the Council's attention to a report which identified the persons who had been selected by the Nominating Officer of each Political Party to hold the following Positions of Responsibility in year one of the current Council term:

Civic Dignitaries	
Lord Mayor	Councillor Finucane
Deputy Lord Mayor	Councillor McReynolds

Committee Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons	
Chairperson Strategic Policy and Resources Committee	Councillor Kingston
Deputy Chairperson Strategic Policy and Resources Committee	Councillor Nicholl
Chairperson City Growth and Regeneration Committee	Councillor Hargey
Deputy Chairperson City Growth and Regeneration Committee	Councillor Howard
Chairperson People and Communities Committee	Councillor Michael Collins
Deputy Chairperson People and Communities Committee	Councillor Kyle
Chairperson Planning Committee	Councillor Carson

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

Deputy Chairperson Planning Committee	Councillor Brooks
Chairperson Licensing Committee	Councillor S. Baker
Deputy Chairperson Licensing Committee	Councillor Hussey
Chairperson Brexit Committee	Councillor de Faoite
Deputy Chairperson Brexit Committee	Councillor McLaughlin
Chairperson Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall	Councillor Mulholland
Deputy Chairperson Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall	Councillor Flynn

Outside Organisations	
Partnership Panel	Councillor McAteer
NI Housing Council	Councillor M. Kelly
Reserve Forces and Cadets Association	Councillor Spence
Arc21	Councillor Ferguson
Arc21	Councillor Magee
Arc21	Councillor Verner

Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnerships Chairperson	
Year 1 (SF)	Councillor Donnelly

Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership Membership	
SF	Councillor Corr
SF	Councillor Canavan
SF	Councillor Micheal Donnelly

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

DUP	Councillor Cobain
DUP	Councillor Sandford
ALL	Councillor Kelly
ALL	Councillor McDonough-Brown
SDLP	Councillor Whyte
GREEN	Councillor Smyth

North Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships

Chairperson (DUP)	Councillor Cobain
SF	Councillor Magee
SF	Councillor Murphy
DUP	Councillor Spence
ALL	Councillor McAllister
GREEN	Councillor O'Hara

South Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships

Chairperson (ALL)	Councillor McDonough-Brown
SF	Councillor Hargey
DUP	Councillor Bunting
SF	Councillor McAteer
SDLP	Councillor McKeown
GREEN	Councillor Groogan

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

East Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships	
Chairperson (DUP)	Councillor Sandford
SF	Councillor McAteer
DUP	Councillor Haire
ALL	Councillor Howard
UUP	Councillor Copeland
PUP	Councillor Kyle

West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships	
Chairperson (ALL)	Councillor M. Kelly
SF	Councillor Canavan
SF	Councillor Donnelly
DUP	Councillor McCoubrey
SDLP	Councillor Heading
PBPA	Councillor Matt Collins

The Council agreed to appoint the Members to the positions of responsibility for 2019/2020, as set out above.

Expressions of Thanks

The Lord Mayor reviewed her year in office, which had focused upon the theme of 'Rights in the City – A Belfast for All' and highlighted a number of successful events in which she had participated. She thanked her Political Party, her family, the Deputy Lord Mayor, the High Sheriff, other Members and Council staff for their support and wished the incoming Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor every success over the forthcoming year.

The Deputy Lord Mayor referred to a number of memorable events which he had hosted or had attended during his year in office and paid tribute to the Lord Mayor, the

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

High Sheriff, his Political Party, his family, other Members and Council staff for the valuable assistance which they had provided.

Tributes

Representatives of a number of Political Parties paid tribute to the Lord Mayor and the Deputy Lord Mayor for the manner in which they had fulfilled their duties during their year in office.

Installation of Lord Mayor

The Chief Executive reminded the Council that it had, earlier in the meeting, approved the Positions of Responsibility for 2019/2020 and that Councillor Finucane had been nominated to serve as Lord Mayor.

Accordingly, Councillor Finucane was installed in Office for the period to end on the date of the annual meeting of the Council in 2020 and he subscribed to the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor Finucane thanked his Political Party for nominating him to serve as Lord Mayor, he outlined his main priorities for the forthcoming year and paid tribute to the previous Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor for the manner in which they had carried out their duties.

(The Lord Mayor, Councillor Finucane, in the Chair.)

Installation of Deputy Lord Mayor

The Council was again reminded that earlier in the meeting Councillor McReynolds had, under the Positions of Responsibility for 2019/2020, been nominated to serve as Deputy Lord Mayor.

Accordingly, Councillor McReynolds was installed in Office for the period to end on the date of the annual meeting of the Council in 2020 and he subscribed to the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor McReynolds paid tribute to the previous Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor, thanked his Political Party for nominating him to serve as Deputy Lord Mayor and outlined his main objectives for his term in office.

(The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McReynolds, in the Chair.)

Appointment of Members to Standing Committees – 2019/2020

The Chief Executive drew the Council's attention to a report which identified the following persons who had been nominated by the Nominating Officer of each Political Party to the Council's Standing Committees for 2019/2020:

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

SF Seats 7

Councillor Beattie	Councillor Black
Councillor Carson	Councillor Garrett
Councillor Hargey	Councillor Murphy
Councillor Walsh	

DUP Seats 6

Councillor Dorrian	Councillor Graham
Councillor Haire	Councillor Kingston
Councillor Pankhurst	Councillor Spence

ALL Seats 4

Councillor Long	Councillor McAllister
Councillor McDonough-Brown	Councillor Nicholl

SDLP Seats 2

Councillor Heading	Councillor Lyons
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GREEN Seats 1

Councillor Groogan

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

SF Seats 6

Councillor S. Baker	Councillor Beattie
Councillor Hargey	Councillor Garrett
Councillor McLaughlin	Councillor Murphy

DUP Seats 5

Councillor Brooks	Councillor Graham
Councillor T. Kelly	Councillor Kingston
Councillor Spence	

ALL Seats 3

Councillor Harvey	Councillor Howard
Councillor Nicholl	

SDLP Seats 3

Councillor Heading	Councillor Lyons
Councillor Whyte	

GREEN Seats 2

Councillor Flynn	Councillor O'Hara
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**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

PBPA Seats 1

Councillor Ferguson

People and Communities Committee

SF Seats 6

Councillor D. Baker	Councillor Black
Councillor Corr	Councillor Donnelly
Councillor Magee	Councillor McLaughlin

DUP Seats 5

Councillor Bunting	Councillor Cobain
Councillor McCoubrey	Councillor Newton
Councillor Verner	

ALL Seats 4

Councillor M. Kelly	Councillor McMullan
Councillor McReynolds	Councillor Mulholland

SDLP Seats 2

Councillor de Faoite	Councillor McCusker
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**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

GREEN Seats 1

Councillor Smyth

PBPA Seats 1

Councillor Michael Collins

PUP Seats 1

Councillor Kyle

Licensing Committee

SF Seats 6

Councillor S. Baker	Councillor Donnelly
Councillor Groves	Councillor Magee
Councillor Magennis	Councillor McAteer

DUP Seats 5

Councillor Bunting	Councillor Hussey
Councillor T. Kelly	Councillor McCoubrey
Councillor Sandford	

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

ALL Seats 3

Councillor Howard	Councillor M. Kelly
Councillor McReynolds	

SDLP Seats 2

Councillor Heading	Councillor Whyte
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GREEN Seats 1

Councillor Smyth

PBPA Seats 1

Councillor Ferguson

UUP Seats 1

Councillor Copeland

PUP Seats 1

Councillor Hutchinson

Planning Committee

SF Seats 4

Councillor Canavan	Councillor Carson
Councillor Garrett	Councillor Murphy

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

DUP Seats 3

Councillor Brooks	Councillor Hussey
Councillor Pankhurst	

ALL Seats 2

Councillor McMullan	Councillor Nicholl
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SDLP Seats 1

Councillor McKeown

Green Seats 2

Councillor Groogan	Councillor O'Hara
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PUP Seats 1

Councillor Matt Collins

UUP Seats 1

Councillor Rodgers

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

Brexit Committee

SF Seats 6

Councillor D. Baker	Councillor Canavan
Councillor Magennis	Councillor McAteer
Councillor McLaughlin	Councillor Walsh

DUP Seats 5

Councillor Brooks	Councillor Dorrian
Councillor Graham	Councillor Haire
Councillor Newton	

ALL Seats 3

Councillor Harvey	Councillor Long
Councillor McAllister	

SDLP Seats 2

Councillor de Faoite	Councillor McKeown
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GREEN Seats 1

Councillor Flynn

PBPA Seats 1

Councillor Michael Collins

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

UUP Seats 1

Councillor Rodgers

PUP Seats 1

Councillor Hutchinson

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Shareholders' Committee

SF Seats 4

Councillor Canavan	Councillor Groves
Councillor Magee	Councillor McAteer

DUP Seats 3

Councillor Cobain	Councillor Haire
Councillor Sandford	

ALL Seats 2

Councillor M. Kelly	Councillor Mulholland
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SDLP Seats 1

Councillor McCusker

GREEN Seats 1

Councillor Flynn

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

PBPA Seats 1

Councillor Matt Collins

UUP Seats 1

Councillor Copeland

PUP Seats 1

Councillor Kyle

The Council agreed to appoint the Members to the Council's Standing Committees for 2019/2020, as set out above.

Appointment of Aldermen

The Chief Executive advised that the Local Government (Transitional, Incidental, Consequential and Supplemental Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 permitted the Council, in an election year, to designate up to a maximum of fifteen Councillors to serve as Aldermen for the duration of the Council term.

The Council agreed that it wished to appoint Councillors to serve as Aldermen for 2019/2023.

Accordingly, it was

Moved by Councillor Dorrian,
Seconded by Councillor Graham and

Resolved – That Councillors Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence be appointed to the office of Alderman for the Council term.

Notices of Motions

Redevelopment and Regeneration of City Centre

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

**Annual Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 21st May, 2019**

“This Council notes the challenges created by the fire in Bank Buildings and the ongoing Council led effort to stimulate economic activity in the area using street animation, pop up play parks and other incentives.

The Council also notes that the redevelopment of our city centre as a shared and mixed use space offers traders, residents and visitors a range of economic, social and cultural opportunities.

Noting the Department for Infrastructure’s public consultation on the future use of the streets around Castle Place and Donegall Place, the Council calls for the pedestrianisation of this area”

The motion was seconded by Councillor McKeown.

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

Climate Change Resilience

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor de Faoite proposed:

“This Council agrees to establish an all-party Working Group on climate change resilience, to explore how Belfast can react to the climate crisis; protect our citizens from the existing and likely future effects of climate breakdown and investigate measures the Council can take to limit its impact on the climate crisis.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Flynn.

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

(The Lord Mayor, Councillor Finucane, in the Chair.)

CCTV in Care Homes

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

“This Council notes the campaign by the Dunmurry Manor Relatives Organisation to highlight the need for CCTV cameras in communal areas of residential homes. The Council calls on the Department for Health to include the provision of CCTV in any contract made with a private home where the care of the elderly is carried out.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Whyte.

On a vote by show of hands, thirty-seven Members voted for the motion and none against and it was declared carried.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson

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Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 21st June, 2019

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Nicholl (Deputy Chairperson) (in the Chair);
Aldermen Haire;
Councillors Beattie, Black, Carson, Dorrian, Garrett,
Graham, Groogan, Heading, Long, Lyons,
McDonough-Brown, Murphy, Pankhurst 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, Strategic Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. J. Tully, Strategic Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from the Chairperson, Alderman Kingston, Alderman Spence and Councillors Hargey and McAllister.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 21st April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 29th April.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Beattie declared an interest in relation to item 2(a) – Memorandum of Understanding between the Belfast Harbour Commissioners and the Council insofar as he was a member of the Board of the Harbour Commissioners, Councillor Murphy declared interest in item 5(d) Financial Reporting Quarter 4, in so far as he was a Board Member of the City Wide Tribunal Service. Both Members left the meeting whilst these items were under consideration.

Last Meeting

The Committee's attention was drawn to the fact that Mr. Mark McBride, Head of Finance and Performance, Mr. Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects, and Mr. Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager, would be retiring from the Council in the near future. The Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, referred to the significant

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

contribution that the officers had made to the Council during their time in service and wished them well in their retirement.

Schedule of Meetings

The Committee approved the Schedule of meetings for August – December 2019, set out below, commencing at 9.30am:

Friday, 23rd August
Friday, 20th September
Friday, 25th October
Friday, 22nd November

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following 5 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.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Harbour Commissioners and Belfast City Council for a Strategic Partnership

The Committee considered a report which was seeking approval for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Belfast Harbour Commissioners and Belfast City Council for a Strategic Partnership Agreement.

The purpose of the MOU was to outline how the Commissioners and the Council would work together through a strategic partnership arrangement to realise their shared ambitions for the strong growth, regeneration and prosperity of the City.

The Committee approved a Memorandum of Understanding between the Belfast Harbour Commissioners and Belfast City Council for a Strategic Partnership Agreement.

Recruitment Update: Appointments to Chief Officer Posts

The Committee noted the appointment of the following successful candidates to key Director/Head of Service posts and approved the outcome of the Legal and Civic Services Department review:

- Director (Operational) of City Regeneration and Development – Cathy Reynolds
- Director (Operational) of Physical Programmes – Sinead Grimes
- Director (Operational) of City and Neighbourhood Services – Ryan Black

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

- Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS) – Claire O’Prey
- Head of Finance (Head of Profession) – Trevor Wallace
- Head of Human Resources (HR) – Christine Sheridan

Bonfire Governance

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the Council’s governance approach to deal with issues at bonfires and to provide an overview of key work regarding the 2019 approach and the key decisions required.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed:

- that officers engage with the Inner East Forum group members to appoint a suitable local umbrella organisation to develop a programme of activity, funded by The Executive Office and Belfast City Council, to animate the Bloomfield Walkway following the completion of Environmental Improvement works; and
- not to install permanent fencing at Ravenscourt Car Park.

Financial Reporting – Quarter 4 2018/19

The Committee considered a report which presented the financial outturn for the Council for the year ended 31st March, 2019. It included a reporting pack which contained a summary of the financial indicators and an executive summary. It also provided a more detailed explanation of each of the relevant indicators and covered the outturn for the year and implications for reserves and the year-end Treasury Management position.

The Director of Finance and Resources reported that, in financial terms, it was a difficult year for the Council. The Primark fire and changes to the rules on holiday pay had led to an additional funding requirement of £3.7m. In order to protect general reserves as much as possible, the Members had agreed previously not to re-allocate any in-year under spends and to use any year-end balances to support the £3.7m funding requirement. The year-end position was that £2.2m of balances were available. That meant that £1.5m of general reserves would be needed to finance the remaining balance. That left the Council with £12.8m of general reserves.

Given the shortfall of funding for the year, there was no finance available to support year-end reallocations or cash flow requests. The financial position of the Council would next be considered in the context of the Quarter 1 2019/20 report which would be presented to the Committee in August 2019.

The Committee:

- noted the year end outturn and reserves position for 2018/19;
- noted that there was no finance available to support year end reallocations or cash flow requests and that the financial position of the Council would next be considered in the context of the Quarter 1 2019/20 report which would be presented to the Committee in August 2019;
- agreed that £75,000 be reallocated from the specified fuel reserve to fund the City Wide Tribunal Service for a period of 3 months;

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

- that any future underspend be used, in the first instance, to replenish the specified fuel reserve; and
- that a request be sent to the Department of Communities seeking a meeting with an All-Party Deputation from the Council, consisting of the Party Leaders (or their nominees), to discuss funding for the City Wide Tribunal Service and other issues.

Giant's Park North Foreshore

The Committee was reminded that the completion of the part ERDF/Invest NI funded infrastructure project for Giant's Park in August 2016 saw the installation of 1.7 Km of roads, together with footways, services and landscaping. The new infrastructure provided the opportunity to market a portion of the site for Cleantech purposes in accordance with the terms of the ERDF/INI grant funding.

At its meeting on 17th August 2018, the Committee had granted authority for the Council to enter into Site Option Agreements with three developers, subject to detailed terms being agreed with the Council's Estates Manager, together with the City Solicitor. Discussions on detailed terms of these Site Option Agreements and associated legal documents were continuing with Evermore Limited (for a proposed Data Centre), Viridian Group (now Energia Group) (for a proposed Anaerobic Digestion Facility) and Giant's Park Belfast Limited (for proposed Leisure Led Scheme) at Giant's Park. Discussions were also ongoing with Invest NI regarding the compatibility of the Data Centre and Leisure Led developments in relation to Invest NI's overall economic and employment goals.

The Committee was advised that the existing Harbour Commissioners (BHC) film studios at Giant's Park was located on a site of approximately 7.6 acres and comprised some 66,000 sq. ft. of studio space, 37,000 sq. ft. of offices/production facility and some 23,000 sq. ft. of workshop space. The existing legal agreement with BHC provided them with an option to enlarge their existing site northwards into an area totalling approximately 2.1 acres. In addition, BHC was seeking to develop film studio facilities on a further 16.4 acres to the south of the existing studios.

The Committee granted approval for the Council to enter into a Site Option Agreement with Belfast Harbour Commissioners for the development of new film studio facilities on approximately 19 acres at the Giant's Park, North Foreshore, subject to detailed terms to be agreed with the Director of Property and Projects, together with the Director of Legal and Civic Services.

Matters referred back from council/Motions

Motion: Working Group on Climate Change

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To consider a motion on climate resilience, which was referred to the Committee by the Council at its meeting on 21st May, and to consider draft Terms of Reference for an all-party Working Group on Climate Resilience.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to

- Consider the motion and to take such action thereon as may be determined.

3.0 Main report

3.1 The Council, at its meeting on 21st May, considered the following motion which had been proposed by Councillor de Faoite and seconded by Councillor Flynn:

'This Council agrees to establish an all-party Working Group on climate change resilience, to explore how Belfast can react to the climate crisis; protect our citizens from the existing and likely future effects of climate breakdown and investigate measures the Council can take to limit its impact on the climate crisis.'

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

3.3 If the committee is minded to approve this motion, the following draft Terms of Reference are proposed:

The Working Group on Climate Change will be responsible for researching, monitoring and considering the potential implications of climate change for the city of Belfast and for making recommendations to Council on a strategy or series of interventions to build Belfast's climate resilience.

Its specific functions include:

- Identifying the specific challenges and risks to the city which may emerge as a result of projected climate change;
- Monitoring the particular implications of climate change for vulnerable and disadvantaged communities across the city;
- Understanding the economic risks to the city associated with climate change – including how it might impact the ability of Belfast to continue to attract and retain investment and grow the rate base;
- Understanding how risks associated with climate change may impact on Belfast Agenda priorities and strategies and programmes in place across the city;
- Influencing and contributing to regional considerations of the implications of climate change on both the work of the Council and on the city;

- Collating and considering good practice from other cities and local authorities from the UK, Ireland and internationally;
 - Considering actions, interventions or programmes on climate adaptation which the Council may wish to take to build the city’s climate resilience;
 - Considering actions, interventions or programmes on climate mitigation which the Council may wish to take to build the city’s climate resilience;
 - Considering public campaigns/public education programmes which the Council may wish to deliver to change behaviour among residents and businesses;
 - Taking account of the Council’s statutory responsibilities on sustainable development and relevant Programme for Government commitments; and
 - Hearing evidence from other parties
- 3.3 Membership of the Working Group will be the same, if agreed earlier in the meeting, as other working groups, that is, one Member from each of the eight Political Parties represented on the Council.
- 3.4 It is proposed that the Working Group will meet every two months – with the aim of a first meeting in the coming weeks.
- 3.5 Members may recall a previous proposal to set up a member and officer Sustainable Development group, with the intention that officers and members could work collaboratively to ‘problem solve’ on substantive issues on sustainable development. As this proposed Working Group is not a decision-making meeting, members may consider it an opportunity to take a similar approach to the operation of the working group.
- 3.6 The Working Group will have an important working relationship to relevant boards and external working groups, including the recently established Climate Commission. It is proposed to undertake a mapping exercise over the summer to set out the range of existing groups across the city and consider the best possible working relationships with them.
- 3.7 Financial & Resource Implications
- There will be increased costs on an ongoing basis in relation to the support for an additional working group but it is considered that such costs can be met from within established budgets.
- 3.8 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
- None.”

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

The Committee adopted the motion and agreed to the establishment of a Working Group on Climate Change to consist of 1 representative from each of the 8 Political Parties on the Council.

**Motion: Single Use Plastics –
Responses from Major Supermarkets**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 4th February, had passed the following motion on Single use plastics by supermarkets, which had been proposed by Councillor McReynolds and Seconded by Councillor McAllister:

“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 what steps they are taking to manage, reduce and reuse single use flexible plastics.”

The Committee was advised that letters had subsequently been forwarded to Asda, Marks and Spencer, Lidl, Tesco and Sainsbury’s in relation to the motion. Responses had been received from each of the retailers which provided details of the steps each was taking in order to reduce plastic waste.

The Committee noted the responses which had been received.

**Update on Motion: Support for Roads
Infrastructure in Scotland**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 4th March, had passed the following motion on Support for Roads Infrastructure in Scotland, which had been proposed by Alderman Kingston and seconded by former Councillor Reynolds:

“This Council:

- Recognises the long-standing cultural and economic ties between Northern Ireland and Scotland, and that fundamental to increasing the benefit to Belfast from this connection is the need to improve transport connections between Scotland and Northern Ireland;*
- Welcomes that the ferry services between Cairnryan and Belfast, by Stena Line, 6 times per day, and between Cairnryan and Larne, by P&O, 7 times per day, are among the busiest services in the UK and represent a strong opportunity for economic and tourism growth; however, the inadequate transport infrastructure beyond the ferry terminals at Cairnryan is inhibiting that growth and require investment to bring them up to standard;*

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

- *Supports the campaign in Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway for investment in the roads infrastructure - along the A77 towards Glasgow/central Scotland and along the A75 towards the Scotland/England border, which are both predominantly single carriageway routes and pass through a number of small towns and villages – and in the rail infrastructure along the same routes, and agrees to write to the Scottish Government in support of calls for a long-term programme of such investment in the transport infrastructure of South West Scotland.”*

A Letter was forwarded subsequently to the Scottish First Minister in relation to the motion and a response had been received from Mr. Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity.

In his response, Mr. Matheson had indicated that Transport Scotland had been taking forward the South West Scotland Transport Study, which had a particular focus on access to the ports at Cairnryan. The draft findings of that were due to be published soon and the public and interested parties could provide comments before the final report was published.

In addition, he had pointed out that Scotland’s National Transport Strategy was currently being reviewed. The Review would work on a draft strategy, which would provide a further opportunity to engage on connectivity between Scotland, Northern Ireland and England.

In conclusion, Mr. Matheson had thanked the Council for its interest and had asked officials at Transport Scotland to consider the points it had made in the South West of Scotland Transport Strategy.

The Committee noted the response which had been received.

**Notice of Motion to Fly the Rainbow Flag
On Pride Day – 3rd August, 2019**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of report or summary of main issues

- 1.1 The screening is provided in response to a request from Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 22 March 2019, when the Committee agreed to a notice of motion ‘to fly the rainbow flag over the City Hall on 3rd August, 2019, subject to an equality screening being undertaken’. In light of the screening you are asked to consider if you wish to affirm the decision previously made.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The screening identified a minor positive impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity and a minor negative impact on the promotion of good relations. The screening should be considered in:

- Making a final decision on the notice of motion.
- The content and appropriateness of a communications campaign to highlight the work undertaken in City Hall, including the exhibition and stain glass windows which represents diverse backgrounds in Belfast, and the recently opened changing places facility, to be promoted as symbols of the city of Belfast, which aims to be welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive for all. Raising awareness of the of the Council's approach to an inclusive and diverse society may counter any perceived negative impact.

3.0 Main report

3.1 A Notice of Motion was agreed at Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on Friday 22 March to fly the Rainbow Flag on Saturday 3 August 2019 (Pride Day), the decision is outlined below. The decision was subsequently amended at the Council's meeting 1 April 2019, with the removal of the statement in brackets.

The Committee agreed to the motion and to fly the rainbow flag over the City Hall on 3rd August, 2019, subject to an equality screening being undertaken and to a report being submitted to the Committee on those dates that are included [in the illuminate programme] where there is a festival or celebration also held in the city and how they could receive dual recognition of a flag and illumination of the building.

3.2 The scope of the screening and this report is the agreement to fly the rainbow flag over the City Hall on 3 August, 2019. The report requested on dual recognition of a flag and illumination of the building will be submitted at a later date.

Key Issues

3.3 The stated aims of the Notice of Motion were:

This Council recognises and values the huge contribution our LGBTQ+ Citizens make to the city of Belfast and beyond. As a statement of our solidarity with our LGBTQ+ citizens and community, and building on

the progressive moves of the council to support Belfast Pride and illuminate the City Hall in the colours of the Pride Rainbow; the council agrees to continue this support, and, as a further demonstration of our solidarity, agrees to fly the rainbow flag over the City Hall from dawn to dusk on Saturday 3rd August 2019 to coincide with the annual Pride parade.

- 3.4 Any action by the Council to demonstrate support for Pride Day through the flying of the rainbow flag would contribute to these objectives.
- 3.5 A broad scope of information was considered in the equality screening including seeking advice on the legal implications of the Notice of Motion in an equality and good relations context.
- 3.6 Information is extracted from the legal opinion in the attached screening, a full copy of the legal opinion is available on request.

Screening questions

- 3.7 A summary of the analysis undertaken in each of the four screening questions for the purpose of Section 75
- 3.8
- i. Q: What is the likely impact of equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy/proposal, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

A: The information gathered, both qualitative and quantitative, demonstrates the complexity of some of the issues relating to protected characteristics listed under Section 75.

Whilst the flying of the rainbow flag on Pride Day would most obviously have a positive impact on those from an LGBT+ background, it is recognised that many people do not identify with one protected characteristic at the exclusion of another. The information presented demonstrates the correlations between sexual orientation, gender and religion, both positive and negative.

Minor positive impact identified.

- 3.9
- ii. Q: Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 equality categories?
- A: The information gathered, both qualitative and quantitative, demonstrates the inter-relationships between the protected

characteristics listed under Section 75. No specific opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for one particular group has been identified.

However, it is important for the work undertaken in City Hall, including the exhibition and stain glass windows which represents diverse backgrounds in Belfast, and the recently opened changing places facility, to be promoted as symbols of the city of Belfast, which aims to be welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive for all.

3.10

iii. Q: To what extent is the policy/proposal likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

A: Good relations issues are conventionally understood to be between the two main communities in Belfast - Protestant / Unionist / Loyalist and Catholic / Nationalist / Republican, including those from different racial backgrounds. Equality Commission for Northern Ireland did not consider the policy to be relevant to good relations. Community Relations Council did not provide an opinion as they considered the matter to lie outside their remit.

Receipt of the complaint on 22 March, the same day as the notice of motion was agreed, from a constituent of Titanic DEA, may provide an indication of a perceived adverse impact on those who do not support the LGBT+ community. The complainant states that as a result of flying the Pride flag, City Hall will not be 'a welcoming place for everyone, especially people like myself who are Christians and believe that Homosexuality is not right.' The complainant states that 'Belfast City Council are clearly taking sides on a political argument and therefore City Hall will not be a 'neutral' building.'

In contrast the group Christians at Pride exists to provide a joyful, loving, inclusive Christian presence at Pride festivals in London and elsewhere in the UK, including Belfast, as noted through our internal staff network. Their website notes: 'Whether you're young or old, catholic or evangelical, lesbian, gay, bi, trans, asexual, or straight, you'd be so welcome to come and join us. Supportive friends, allies, family members and church leaders all very welcome too'.

It is recognised that attitudes towards Pride differ and a minor negative impact is identified.

3.11

iv. Q: Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

A: The Council ensures, as far as reasonably possible, that there is a balance between events which are of relevance to the two main communities.

Raising awareness of the of the Council's approach to an inclusive and diverse society may counter any perceived negative impact.

3.12 In addition to the screening undertaken, the Committee may be minded to consider the matter of precedent. The legal opinion comments 'the decision of 9th August 2013 in relation to the Armed Forces flag is notable because it represents the only occasion, following the Council's decision on the Union Flag in December 2012, where the Council has agreed to fly a flag other than the Union Flag. It is also notable in that it provides for a flag to be flown for a purpose other than to mark the constitutional status of the city.

3.13 Thus the flying of the Armed Forces flag demonstrates an occasion where a flag has been flown at City Hall to 'show support' for a community and coincide with an organised festival/celebration'.

3.14 In concluding the legal opinion notes 'it is my view that the flying of the Pride flag on one day in 2019, to coincide with the Pride festival, which is stated to be one of the biggest in the city, is unlikely to be subject to successful challenge by judicial review or indeed by a complaint to the Fair Employment Tribunal. That is of course provided that the Council properly assess the potential impact on Section.75 categories through screening, and EQIA if screening concludes that is necessary.'

3.15 Financial & Resource Implications

Costs for the flag will be met from existing budgets.

3.16 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The screening undertaken demonstrates due regard to the promotion of equality of opportunity and regard to the promotion of good relations.

A minor positive impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity was identified. A minor negative impact on the promotion of good relations was identified.

There are no rural needs impacts.”

The Committee agreed to the flying of the Rainbow Flag over the City Hall on 3rd August, 2019.

Governance

Overview of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee – Roles and Responsibilities

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an overview of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and its roles and responsibilities.

Review of the Council’s Scheme of Allowances

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To consider an amendment to the Council’s Scheme of Allowances to provide for the withholding of allowances to a Member who is disqualified, suspended or partially suspended following an adjudication by the Local Government Commissioner for Standards in relation to a breach of the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1. Approve the amendment to the Scheme of Allowances as set out in the report;**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

3.1.1 The Council is required, under the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012, to publish a Scheme of Allowances, which sets out the allowances, and support services that apply to a Councillor.

3.1.2 The Council’s current Scheme does not cover what should happen if a Councillor is disqualified, suspended or partially suspended following an adjudication by the Local Government Commissioner

for Standards in relation to a breach of the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors.

- 3.1.3 The Committee has previously considered reports on this matter and deferred consideration until the Local Government Commissioner for Standards had provided information on her role in the issue. However, the Council has received an addendum to circular LG 23/2016 from the Department for Communities requiring the Council to update its Scheme of Allowances in relation to the payment of basic allowance to provide that:
- 3.1.4 *'In circumstances where a councillor is suspended from carrying out the duties of a councillor, in accordance with section 59(5) or section 60(1) of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, the part of the basic allowance payable to the councillor in respect of the period for which the councillor is suspended should be withheld.'*
- 3.1.5 The addendum also requires the Council to update its Scheme of Allowances, as it applies to Special Responsibility Allowances, to provide that:
- 3.1.6 *'In circumstances where a councillor is suspended from carrying out the duties of a councillor, in accordance with section 59(5) or section 60(1) of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, any SRA payable to the councillor in respect of the period for which the councillor is suspended should be withheld.'*
- 3.1.7 As the Council receives its lawful authority to make any payments from the Department under the Payments to Councillors Regulations, then it must abide by any instructions from the Department in relation to those Regulations.
- 3.1.8 The advice of the Department for Communities was sought on the practical application of these changes and Mr Jeff Glass from DfC has commented as follows:

'The basic allowance is not hypothecated to a certain number or level of duties, and it is not related to a certain time commitment by councillors in carrying out their approved duties, it is however payable to councillors for carrying out the role of a councillor. If a councillor is suspended from a particular duty/role but is still carrying out duties as a councillor the basic allowance may still be payable. If a councillor is suspended from carrying out a role that attracts a SRA within the council's scheme, the council should consider withholding the element of SRA payable for that duty. If a councillor is suspended from carrying out the role of a councillor by the Commissioner for Standards under section 59(5) and as basic allowance is payable for carrying out the role of a councillor

then that allowance should be withheld for the relevant period. Similarly, if a councillor is suspended from carrying out the role of the councillor under section 60(1) of the 2014 Act then payment of all allowances should be withheld. If the suspension under section 60(1) is not withheld the council can subsequently consider paying allowances for the period that was originally withheld. It is for each council to seek its own legal opinion on any issues it may have.'

- 3.1.9 Accordingly, in line with the guidance issued in the circular and in line with the advice provided by Mr Glass, the Committee is requested to agree to the amendment to the Scheme of Allowances as follows:

3.1.10 'Basic Allowance

In circumstances where a councillor is wholly suspended from carrying out the duties of a councillor in accordance with section 59(5) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, the whole of the basic allowance payable to the councillor in respect of the period for which the councillor is suspended shall be withheld.

In circumstances where a councillor is wholly suspended from carrying out the duties of a councillor in accordance with section 60(1) (Decisions on Interim Reports) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, the whole of the basic allowance payable to the councillor in respect of the period for which the councillor is suspended shall be withheld, subject to the provision that the allowance withheld shall be payable to the councillor concerned should the final adjudication of the Commissioner for Standards exonerate the councillor concerned.

In circumstances where a councillor is partially suspended from carrying out the duties of a councillor in accordance with section 59(5) or section 60(1) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, the basic allowance payable to the councillor in respect of the period for which the councillor is partially suspended shall continue.

3.1.11 'Special Responsibility Allowance

In circumstances where a councillor is wholly suspended from carrying out the duties of a councillor in accordance with section 59(5) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, the whole of any special responsibility allowance payable to the councillor in respect of the period for which the councillor is suspended shall be withheld.

In circumstances where a councillor is wholly suspended from carrying out the duties of a councillor in accordance with section

60(1) (Decisions on Interim Reports) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, the whole of any special responsibility allowance payable to the councillor in respect of the period for which the councillor is suspended shall be withheld, subject to the provision that the allowance withheld shall be payable to the councillor concerned should the final adjudication of the Commissioner for Standards exonerate the councillor concerned.

In circumstances where a councillor is partially suspended from carrying out the duties of a councillor in accordance with section 59(5) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, that part of any special responsibility allowance (to which the partial suspension relates) payable to the councillor in respect of the period for which the councillor is partially suspended shall be withheld.

In circumstances where a councillor is partially suspended from carrying out the duties of a councillor in accordance with section 60(1) (Decisions on Interim Reports) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, that part of any special responsibility allowance (to which the partial suspension relates) payable to the councillor in respect of the period for which the councillor is partially suspended shall be withheld, subject to the provision that the allowance withheld shall be payable to the councillor concerned should the final adjudication of the Commissioner for Standards exonerate the councillor concerned.'

3.2 Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.2.1** There would not be any adverse impact on the Council's budgets. Any individual Councillor who is disqualified, suspended or partially suspended may be affected adversely.

3.3 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are not any Good Relations, Equality or Rural Needs issues associate with this report."

The Committee approved the amendment to the Scheme of Allowances as set out in the report.

Budget and Transformation Panel and Party Leaders' Forum Refreshed Names and Terms of Reference

The Director of Legal and Civic Services submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1** To consider whether to establish, as a successor to the Budget and Transformation Panel, a Party Leaders' Consultative Panel

and to re-establish the Party Leaders' Forum subject to the suggested remit, arrangements and conventions as set out in the report.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- **Agree to establish the fora as set out in the report to enable better communication and dialogue on strategic and/or political/controversial issues.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

The Budget and Transformation Panel was established by Strategic Policy & Resources Committee and terms of reference agreed in March 2009 to provide political leadership and oversight of the Council's efficiency and transformation agenda and the Council's finances in general. It comprised one representative from each political party grouping plus the Chair of Strategic Policy & Resources Committee however currently, it is attended by the Party Leaders and the Chair of Strategic Policy & Resources Committee. It meets every month on the week before the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee meeting. Secretariat is provided by the Strategic Performance Manager.

3.2 As a Working Group, it is not decision-making and its minutes are brought to Strategic Policy & Resources Committee. It provides a forum for officers to discuss issues with Members to get their initial views and ensure that the appropriate level of information is provided to Members to support the formal decision-making process at Strategic Policy & Resources Committee. No formal recommendations are made to Strategic Policy & Resources Committee as issues are subsequently taken to Committee for decision.

3.3 The Party Leaders' Forum was established in 2011 as part of strategic planning process which led to the development of the Council's Investment Programme. It evolved to become a safe space in which politically sensitive issues could be discussed. It was established to be led by Members with officers present only at the request of Members. It was originally externally facilitated however secretariat is now provided by the Chief Executive's Support Manager. It meets every month the week after the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee meeting.

- 3.4 Again, as a Working Group, it is not decision-making and its minutes are circulated among the Party Leaders. No formal terms of reference were agreed and it currently operates under the same [terms of reference](#) of the Budget and Transformation Panel.
- 3.5 Both of these fora have operated successfully to act as a clearing house for potential complex reports going to Committee and/or to provide a safe space in which discussions may take place on political, confidential or contentious issues. Other Councils have followed Belfast City Council's decision to establish such fora and they are now the accepted norm within governance frameworks.
- 3.6 As part of the planning for the new governance arrangements for the new council, it was agreed at Strategic Policy & Resources in April 2019 to retain these working groups and refresh their names and terms of references.

3.7 Key Issues

Budget and Transformation Panel

Following consultation with Members at Budget and Transformation Panel last week, the following name is proposed as an option: Party Leaders' Consultative Panel.

The suggested remit of the Party Leaders' Consultative Panel would be as follows:

- To receive briefings and updates on the Council's programmes of work relating to the Belfast Agenda priorities.
- To support the development and implementation of the Council's Corporate Plan and associated programmes of work.
- To introduce complex or sensitive reports/issues or proposed reports prior to committee or to discuss issues arising from committees/Council
- To receive information on oversight of the Council's finances and discuss future rates setting.
- To receive and consider complex or sensitive information prior to decision making through committee and Council.
- To raise sensitive resource (particularly human resource) issues
- To receive and discuss proposals relating to governance arrangements

3.8 Party Leaders' Forum

Retain the name and agree the remit as suggested below:

- To provide a forum for party groups to discuss emerging political/contentious issues
- To facilitate discussions in respect of cultural, equality or good relations issues
- To act as a forum for discussions with other city and/or government stakeholders or neighbouring councils

- 3.9** Both fora would continue to be non-decision making. The cycle of meetings for the Party Leaders' Consultative Panel would follow the current convention of being held in the week prior to a meeting of the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee. The meeting of the Party Leaders' Forum would be monthly or as required. The current secretariat arrangements would be retained. Parties would have the ability to request items to be placed on the agenda for Party Leaders' Forum. The meeting of the Party Leaders' Forum may take place in the absence of officers depending on the nature of the issue or issues under discussion. For those meetings at which an officer is present a minute of the proceedings will be recorded for those items which result in a recommendation going to a standing committee for a decision. This is in line with the position as agreed by the Council in [December 2017](#). In respect of the Party Leaders' Consultative Panel a minute will be circulated within two working days but subject to an understanding that confidential information may be redacted and that the minute will be managed to reflect the sensitivity of matters that were discussed.
- 3.10** It is noted that the Council, post local government elections, has currently no independents and that all parties will or may be represented at the fora. In respect of both fora Party Leaders may select a nominee from their membership to attend in their absence or if they have a particular interest in a matter under discussion. The Party Leaders' Consultative Panel will be chaired by the Chair of Strategic Policy & Resources Committee or by the Chief Executive in his or her absence. The Party Leaders' Forum may elect its own Chair on a meeting by meeting basis or may be chaired, by consent, by the Chief Executive.
- 3.11** All participating parties must agree to the principle of confidentiality of discussions within these fora and of mutual trust and respect. This does not preclude the parties in respect of making public statements or adopting public positions in respect of matters after they appear on committee agendas but the parties must agree that discussions at these fora will remain confidential.

3.12 Financial & Resource Implications

None additional

3.13 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None.”

The Committee agreed to the establishment of a Party Leaders' Consultative Forum, as a successor to the Budget and Transformation Panel, and to reconstitute the Party Leaders' Forum and approved the suggested remits, arrangements and conventions as set out in the report.

Appointment of Members to Outside Bodies

The Democratic Services Manager advised the Committee that there were a number of Outside Bodies which requested that a Member or several Members sit on the Board of their Body. Accordingly, as it was the start of the new Council term, these appointments needed to be made.

He explained that several appointments to Outside Bodies were determined by the Department of the Environment to fall within the process established in the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 for Positions of Responsibility. Those were arc 21, the Partnership Panel, the Northern Ireland Housing Council, the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association and the Policing and Community Safety Partnership and its 4 District Partnerships. Those appointments were determined using the d'Hondt system of proportionality alongside the appointments for the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor and the Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons of the 5 Standing Committees of the Council and these had been appointed at the Annual meeting of the Council in May.

In considering the requests for appointments to Outside Bodies which were not considered to be Positions of Responsibility, the Council was free to choose any methodology it so wished. However, in keeping with the process of proportionality which was enshrined in the 2014 Act and which had been employed in the Council for a number of years, the Committee had approved of the use of the Sainte Lague system.

The process was for all of the appointments to Outside Bodies to be grouped together in one pool and the Party Leaders at a meeting on 14th June had selected the positions set out in the appendix below.

In order for a process to be established which dealt with any additional requests from Outside Bodies for Council representation during the Council Term, it was recommended that the party or parties who would have had the next available choice(s) under the Sainte Lague table would be asked to nominate a representative(s).

With regard to NILGA, its Constitution required that the Council's 10 nominations reflect the overall balance of the political parties on the Council. That would not be able to be achieved if the 10 positions were to be included in a larger pool of positions. Therefore, for

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

that reason, the Party Leaders had agreed that the 10 nominations be allocated using a separate Sainte Lague exercise.

The outcome of a Sainte Lague exercise provided for 3 Sinn Fein, 2 DUP, 2 Alliance, 1 SDLP, 1 Green and 1 PBPA nominations:

Appointments to Outside Bodies

14th June, 2019

National Association of Councillors

SF	Councillor Magennis
SF	Councillor Magee
DUP	Alderman Sandford
DUP	Councillor T Kelly
DUP	Councillor Pankhurst
PBPA	Councillor Ferguson
UUP	Alderman Rodgers
ALL	Councillor Hanvey

Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)

SF	Councillor Corr
SF	Councillor Garrett
SF	Councillor Murphy
DUP	Alderman Haire
DUP	Alderman Sandford
ALL	Councillor Howard

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

ALL	Councillor Mulholland
SDLP	Councillor de Faoite
GREEN	Councillor Groogan
PBPA	Councillor Ferguson

Belfast City Centre Management Board

Green	Councillor Flynn
SF	Councillor Corr

George Best Belfast City Airport Forum

DUP	Alderman Haire
PUP	Councillor Kyle

Visit Belfast

SF	Councillor Walsh
DUP	Councillor Cobain
ALL	Councillor Hanvey
SDLP	Councillor McCusker

Active Belfast Ltd Board

SF	Councillor Carson
SF	Councillor Corr
SF	Councillor McLaughlin
DUP	Councillor Newton

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

Association of Port Health Authorities – Executive Board

SDLP	Councillor Heading
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Belfast Hills Partnership

SF	Councillor Corr
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Board of the Ulster Orchestra Society Limited

SDLP	Councillor Whyte
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Cathedral Quarter Trust

ALL	Councillor McAllister
DUP	Councillor Pankhurst

Grand Opera House Trust

UUP	Alderman Copeland
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Groundwork Northern Ireland

DUP	Councillor Dorrian
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Lagan Canal Restoration Trust

SF	Councillor McAteer
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Lagan Rural Partnership Local Action Group

All	Councillor Nicholl
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Lagan Valley Regional Park Advisory Committee

ALL	Councillor Nicholl
SF	Councillor McAteer
DUP	Councillor Bunting

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

Linenhall Library Board

PBPA	Councillor Matt Collins
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Local Strategic Partnership on Travellers Issues

SF	Councillor Groves
PBPA	Councillor Michael Collins

Lyric Theatre Education Advisory Panel

ALL	Councillor McDonough-Brown
GREEN	Councillor Groogan

Northern Ireland Amenity Council

ALL	Councillor McReynolds
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Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme

DUP	Councillor Graham
DUP	Councillor Bunting

Somme Advisory Council

DUP	Councillor Graham
ALL	Councillor Long
SDLP	Councillor McKeown

Tall Ships

DUP	Alderman Kingston
SDLP	Councillor de Faoite

Sustainable Community & Demographics Working Group

GREEN	Councillor O'Hara
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**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

NILGA Policy & Learning Network - Reform, Devolution and Improvement

SF	Councillor McAteer
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NILGA Policy & Learning Network - Local Economic Development, Investment and International Affairs

ALL	Councillor Hanvey
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NILGA Policy & Learning Network - Place Shaping and Infrastructure

SF	Councillor S Baker
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NILGA Policy & Learning Network - Elected Member Development

SF	Councillor Canavan
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NILGA Policy & Learning Network - Health, Social and Environmental Wellbeing

SF	Councillor Donnelly
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The Committee:

1. Noted that the Council had agreed that all of the appointments to Outside Bodies would be grouped into one overall pool for the purposes of allocating positions.
2. Agreed to nominate the representatives to NILGA as a separate one off exercise as set out in the report.
3. Noted that the Council had agreed to use the Sainte Lague methodology to provide an order of party political choices of these positions.
4. Agreed to appoint the positions on Outside Bodies as set out above.
5. Agreed , should any other requests be received for Council representation on Outside Bodies during the Council Term, the party or parties who would have had the next available choice(s) under the Sainte Lague table would be asked to nominate a representative(s).

Appointment of Members to Partnership Boards

The Democratic Services Manager submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

To consider the appointment of Members to the four Partnership Boards.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Approve of the use of the Quota Greatest Remainder method to identify those parties entitled to nominate representatives to the Forward South Belfast and Eastside Partnership Boards, based upon the number of Members returned at the Local Elections for the District Electoral Areas coterminous with the Partnerships' areas.**
- 2. Approve of the Party allocations for the Forward South and Eastside Partnerships as set out in Sections 3.1.5 and 3.1.6 of the main report.**
- 3. Approve of the compromise arrangement for the appointment of Members to the West Belfast and Greater Shankill Partnership Boards and to the Party allocations under this arrangement as set out in Sections 3.1.7 to 3.1.9 of the main report.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

3.1.1 The Council, in 2011 and again in 2015, made nominations of Members to serve on the 5 Partnership Boards (North, South, East and West Belfast and Greater Shankill). These nominations were made from the Members returned for the related District Electoral Areas (DEAs) at the Local Elections, depending upon the political party strengths in those DEAs.

3.1.2 The representation in 2015, taking account of the new DEAs established as a result of the redrawing of the boundaries as part of the Review of Public Administration, was:

North Belfast Partnership – 6 Members from Castle and Oldpark DEAs

South Belfast Partnership – 8 Members from Botanic and Balmoral DEAs

East Belfast Partnership – 8 Members from Lisnasharragh, Ormiston and Titanic DEAs

West Belfast Partnership – 8 Members from Black Mountain and Collin DEAs

Greater Shankill Partnership - 6 Members - 4 from Court DEA (excluding the 2 SF Members) and 2 Unionist Members from Oldpark DEA

3.1.3 The North Belfast Partnership no longer exists and therefore no nominations are to be made from the Council. The South Belfast Partnership has been renamed as Forward South Partnership and

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

only now require 5 Members from the Council rather than 8. The East Belfast Partnership has been renamed as the Eastside Partnership and still requires 8 Members.

3.1.4 The Committee is recommended to again adopt the Quota Greatest Remainder system of proportionality to determine the party representation to the Partnership Boards in South and East Belfast as set out below.

3.1.5 Forward South Partnership Board (5 Members)

The appointees are drawn proportionately from the Parties represented in the Balmoral and Botanic DEAs.

The strengths of the Parties in these DEAs is set out below, together with the number of places which the Parties would be entitled to on the Board based upon the strict application of proportionality.

Party	Number of Members	Representation
DUP	3	(1.50) 2
ALL	2	(1.00) 1
SF	2	(1.00) 1
SDLP	2	(1.00) 1
Green	1	(0.50) 0
	10	5

Four of the five seats are allocated automatically and, in accordance with established practice, the party with the greatest remainder figure should be given the additional seat. Accordingly, it is recommended that the extra place is allocated to the DUP.

3.1.6 Eastside Partnership Board (8 Members)

The appointees are drawn proportionately from the Parties represented in the Lisnasharragh, Ormiston and Titanic DEAs.

Party	Number of Members	Representation
ALL	7	(2.95) 3
DUP	6	(2.53) 3
UUP	2	(0.84) 1
Green	2	(0.84) 1
PUP	1	(0.42) 0
SDLP	1	(0.42) 0
	19	8

Four of the eight seats are allocated automatically (2 ALL and 2 DUP). The ALL, UUP, Green and DUP have remainder scores of .95, .84, .84 and .53 respectively and are allocated the next 4 seats.

3.1.7 West Belfast Partnership Board (8 Members) and Greater Shankill Partnership Board (6 Members)

The redrawing of the DEAs for the new Council had a particularly significant effect in the West and Greater Shankill areas of the city and, similarly, with the consideration of the appointment of Members to the West Belfast and Greater Shankill Partnership Boards.

The area covered by the Greater Shankill Partnership Board encompasses most of the Court DEA, excluding the Lower Falls area, as well as parts of the Oldpark area. The West Belfast Partnership by contrast includes Black Mountain and Collin DEAs as well as the Lower Falls part of the Court DEA. It is therefore very difficult to identify DEAs which are coterminous with the area covered by the two Boards.

Given this disparity, it is considered that the best way to proceed is to take the 8 places on the West Belfast Partnership Board and the 6 on the Greater Shankill Partnership Board together and allocate places based upon the Party strengths across the Black Mountain, Collin, Court and Oldpark DEAs. Accordingly, the representation to the West Belfast and Greater Shankill Partnership Boards would be:

Party	Number of Members	Representation
SF	15	(8.40) 8
DUP	4	(2.24) 2
PBPA	3	(1.68) 2
SDLP	2	(1.12) 1
PUP	1	(0.56) 1
	25	14

Twelve of the fourteen seats are allocated automatically. The PBPA and PUP, with the greatest remainder figures of .68 and .56 respectively, are allocated the remaining two seats.

Following a meeting of the Party Leaders concerned, the following compromise agreement has been reached:

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

3.1.8 West Belfast Partnership Board (8 Members)

Party	Representation
SF	7
PBPA	1

3.1.9 Greater Shankill Partnership Board (6 Members)

Party	Representation
DUP	2
SF	1
PBPA	1
SDLP	1
PUP	1

3.2 Financial & Resource Implications

3.2.1 None associated with this report.

3.3 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None associated with this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Appointment of Members to Building Successful Communities Forums

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To consider the appointment of Members to the five Building Successful Communities Forums operating in the city.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Agree to the use of the Quota Greatest Remainder system of proportionality to allocate the available places on the five Forums amongst the political parties represented in the relevant DEAs.**
- 2. Agree to the allocation of the seats on the five Forums as follows:**

- Lower Oldpark and Hillview – 1 SF and 1 SDLP
- Tiger's Bay and Mountcollyer – 1 DUP and 1 SF
- Lenadoon and Glencolin – 2 SF
- Lower Shankill & Browns Square and Falls – 2 DUP, 1 SF and 1 PUP

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

3.1.1 In October, 2013 the Department for Social development launched five pilot schemes in Belfast under the Building Successful Communities Programme. These were:

- Lower Oldpark and Hillview
- Tiger's Bay and Mountcollyer
- Lower Shankill and Brown Square
- Lenadoon and Glencolin
- Lower Falls

3.1.2 These Forums, up until 2015, had membership from elected representatives, local communities and statutory and voluntary agencies. The Forums were tasked with identifying the particular housing and regeneration needs of their area and developing and implementing plans to reverse the decline in those areas and create more sustainable communities.

3.1.3 Elected member representation on the Forums had been identified by way of nomination from MLAs. However, the Department in 2015 sought the formal nomination of up to two Council representatives on each of the five Forums.

3.1.4 In 2015, the Council agreed, in order to ensure that the nominated Members were from the District Electoral Areas (DEAs) in which the Forums operated and that the nominations were proportional to the political party strengths in those DEAs, that a Quota Greatest remainder exercise should be undertaken. It is recommended that the same approach is taken for the nomination of Members in 2019.

3.1.5 The five Forums and the relevant DEAs have been identified as:

- Lower Oldpark and Hillview – Oldpark DEA
- Tiger's Bay and Mountcollyer – Castle DEA
- Lenadoon and Glencolin – Collin and Black Mountain DEAs
- Lower Shankill and Brown Square – Court DEA
- Lower Falls – Court DEA

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

3.1.6 Accordingly, it is suggested that the two Forums for Lower Shankill and Brown Square and Lower Falls should be grouped together for the purpose of the proportionality exercise as the membership for both is being drawn from the Court DEA, as was the case in 2015.

3.1.7 The outcome of the Quota Greatest Remainder exercise is set out below:

3.1.8 Lower Oldpark and Hillview – Oldpark DEA

Party	Number of Members	Representation
SF	3	(1.00) 1
SDLP	1	(0.33) 1
DUP	1	(0.33) 0
PBPA	1	(0.33) 0
	6	2

The Quota Greatest Remainder system dictates that where two or more parties have the same remainder figure the available place should be allocated to that party which attracted the most first preference votes in the most recent local elections. In this instance, SDLP, DUP and PBPA each have a remainder figure of 0.33 therefore the second seat is allocated to SDLP.

The two seats are allocated to SF and SDLP.

3.1.9 Tiger's Bay and Mountcollyer – Castle DEA

Party	Number of Members	Representation
DUP	2	(1.00) 1
SF	1	(0.33) 1
ALL	1	(0.33) 0
SDLP	1	(0.33) 0
Green	1	(0.33) 0
	6	2

The Quota Greatest Remainder system dictates that where two or more parties have the same remainder figure the available place should be allocated to that party which attracted the most first preference votes in the most recent local elections. In this instance, SF, ALL, SDLP and Green each have a remainder figure of 0.33 therefore the second seat is allocated to SF.

The two available seats are therefore allocated to DUP and SF.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

3.1.10 Lenadoon and Glencolin – Collin and Black Mountain DEAs

Party	Number of Members	Representation
SF	10	(1.54) 2
PBPA	2	(0.31) 0
SDLP	1	(0.15) 0
	13	2

The two available seats are therefore allocated to SF.

3.1.11 Lower Shankill & Brown Square and Lower Falls – Court DEA

Party	Number of Members	Representation
DUP	3	(2.00) 2
SF	2	(1.33) 1
PUP	1	(0.67) 1
	6	4

The four available seats across the two Forum areas are allocated to DUP, SF and PUP. It will be a matter for agreement between the three parties concerned as to which of the two Forums they wish to nominate to. In the absence of such agreement, the order of choice should be in relation to the overall Party representation in the Court DEA.

3.2 Financial & Resource Implications

3.2.1 None associated with this report.

3.3 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

3.3.1 None associated with this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Working Groups 2019

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 12th April, it had considered a report on the new Council term commencing in May, 2019 and had agreed to continue with the existing governance arrangements, that is, a traditional committee system, with 7 standing Committees.

Since 2007, the Council had agreed also to appoint Working Groups to focus on issues of particular concern. In addition, the Council had agreed previously the following principles associated with appointment of Working Groups:

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

- Working Groups should be established only if they are considered to be essential for the achievement of effective and efficient decision-making;
- such Working Groups should be appointed for a fixed-term and for a specific purpose;
- the Groups would not have decision-making powers but rather would produce a report with recommendations (usually in the form of minutes of the meeting) for consideration by the parent Committee;
- after the Working Group has concluded the business for which it was established, it would cease to exist; and
- Working Groups should be formed on the basis of All-Party representation with nominees sought from the Party Group Leaders.

At the meeting on 12th April, the Committee had agreed to the reconstitute the following Working Groups:

Audit and Risk Panel
Budget and Transformation Panel / Party Group Leaders' Forum
North Foreshore Members' Steering Group
Reference Group on Older People
Shared City Partnership
Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group

A copy of the current Terms of Reference for each of the Working Groups is attached at Appendix 1.

The normal practice/convention for the Council in establishing Working Groups was to appoint one representative from each Political Party which had two or more representatives on the Council. If the Committee was minded to retain this convention, none of the current political parties would be adversely affected since all eight Parties had two or more Elected Members on the Council.

The change and reconstitution of both the Budget and Transformation Panel and the Party Leaders' Forum had been considered and agreed earlier in the meeting

It was pointed out that the North Foreshore Members' Steering Group previously had two representatives from each Party and the Committee might wish to give consideration to this as that would result in a membership of 16 (which would actually be larger than two of the Standing Committees).

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

The Committee had also agreed to retain the Area working Groups but that these move to a more area-based framework approach based on local needs encompassing:

- council service and facility provision;
- external or multi-agency and facility provision;
- agreed local area plans to improve outcomes for local people; and
- longer term local regeneration and investment plans (including capital, revenue or other projects with multiple funding sources).

The Area Working Groups were to be reviewed within that context and, following a series of workshops with each Group, a revised Terms of Reference would be drawn up which would be submitted to the Committee for approval in late summer/autumn.

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference - Working Groups

Reference Group on Older people

- To provide political direction and input to the development of the city planning process for improving the health, wellbeing and independence of older people within Belfast
- Maximise the impact the Council can have in working with key stakeholders through the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership to meet the needs of older people in Belfast
- Provide political legitimacy to advocate, lobby and challenge on policy issues which directly impact on older people's quality of life.
- Direct the work of the officer group in improving and joining up council services for older people.

Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Development Working Group

To support cemetery and crematorium development and improvement of bereavement services for Belfast through:

- consideration of evidence/reports in order to advise on issues and inform options around future provision;
- providing strategic direction and input into the city's framework for cemetery and crematorium development;
- making recommendations to the relevant Committee regarding cemetery and crematorium development; and
- acting as a communication channel to Party Groups and to other Councillors in general and ensure that the facts of issues around cemetery and crematorium development are fully understood.

North Foreshore Member' Steering Group

The remit of the Group is to oversee the management of the North Foreshore, especially in regard to policy, resource allocation and financial risk of future development at the site.

Shared City Partnership

The role of the SCP is:

- To assist the elected political leadership of the Council, staff, diverse civil society interests and partnering agencies to engage pro-actively on all Good Relations issues on behalf of citizens and be a collective voice, promoting a common vision for Good Relations in the City.

The purpose of the SCP is:

- To oversee the delivery of the Belfast PEACE IV Peace and Reconciliation
- Action Plan while also continuing with the core Good Relations agenda for
- the City including the good relations outcomes linked to the Belfast Agenda
- and the new Local Development Plan.
- To oversee the delivery of the Good Relations Action Plan and associated
- District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP).
- To provide a challenge function to the council and other represented
- organisations to ensure good relations is at the forefront of policy and programming development which impacts on the City.
- To promote good relations between people of different religious and political beliefs and different racial groups in every aspect of Council activities.
- To use the Council's influence as a democratically elected body, providing civic leadership to the City, to promote good relations throughout society.
- To promote equality of opportunity in the discharge of the Council's responsibilities, taking into account the needs of persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation, of men and women generally, of persons with a disability and persons without and of persons with dependants and persons without;
- To promote respect and understanding throughout the City by providing support, including the equitable use of available budgets, for appropriate initiatives which celebrate the cultural diversity of Belfast.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

- To act as an mechanism to ensure that major Belfast City Council initiatives both revenue and capital are cognisant of their duty in relation to Section 75, Part B

Audit and Risk Panel

Statement of purpose

1. The Audit and Risk Panel is a key component of Belfast City Council's corporate governance arrangements. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.
2. The purpose of the Audit and Risk Panel is to provide independent assurance to those charged with governance (Members and senior management) on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment. It provides independent review of the council's governance, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It will provide an independent scrutiny of the council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it exposes the council to risk and weakens the control environment. It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.

Governance, risk and control

3. To review the council's corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework and consider annual governance reports and assurances.
4. To review the Annual Governance Statement prior to approval and consider whether it properly reflects the risk environment and supporting assurances, taking into account internal audit's opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the council's framework of governance, risk management and control.
5. To consider the council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements.
6. To consider the council's framework of assurance and ensure that it adequately addresses the risks and priorities of the council.
7. To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management in the council, to include overseeing the council's risk, control and governance arrangements for health and safety.
8. To approve the council's risk management strategy and monitor progress in addressing risk-related issues reported to the Panel, including the corporate risk register and information on the management of key corporate risks.
9. To consider reports on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.
10. To review the assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the council from fraud and corruption.
11. To approve the council's fraud and whistleblowing policies and monitor the implementation of these policies, including the counter-fraud strategy, actions and resources.
12. To review and oversee the Council's framework and related arrangements for performance management.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

Internal audit

13. To approve the internal audit charter.
14. To review proposals made in relation to the appointment of external providers of internal audit services and to make recommendations.
15. To approve the risk-based internal audit plan, including internal audit's resource requirements, the approach to using other sources of assurance and any work required to place reliance upon those other sources.
16. To approve significant interim changes to the risk-based internal audit plan and resource requirements.
17. To make appropriate enquiries of both management and the Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services to determine if there are any inappropriate scope or resource limitations.
18. To consider reports from the Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services on internal audit's performance during the year, including the performance of external providers of internal audit services. These will include:
 - a) Updates on the work of internal audit including key findings, issues of concern and action in hand as a result of internal audit work.
 - b) Regular reports on the results of the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme.
 - c) Reports on instances where the internal audit function does not conform to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and Local Government Application Note, considering whether the non-conformance is significant enough that it must be included in the Annual Governance Statement.
19. To consider the Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services' annual report:
 - d) The statement of the level of conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and Local Government Application Note and the results of the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme that supports the statement – these will indicate the reliability of the conclusions of internal audit.
 - e) The opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the council's framework of governance, risk management and control together with the summary of the work supporting the opinion – these will assist the committee in reviewing the Annual Governance Statement.
20. To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.
21. To receive reports outlining the action taken where the Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services has concluded that management has accepted a level of risk that may be unacceptable to the authority or there are concerns about progress with the implementation of agreed actions.
22. To contribute to the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme and in particular, to the external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place at least once every five years.
23. To consider a report on the effectiveness of internal audit to support the Annual Governance Statement, where required to do so by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

24. To support the development of effective communication with the Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services.

External audit

25. To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and the report to those charged with governance.
26. To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.
27. To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.
28. To commission work from internal and external audit.
29. To advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external and internal audit and other inspection agencies or relevant bodies.
30. To consider the external auditor's report on performance management, specifically the annual improvement assessment and to consider the adequacy of management responses / action taken to address issues arising from these reports.

Financial reporting

31. To review the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the council.
32. To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

Accountability arrangements, referral and reporting

33. To report to those charged with governance (Members and senior management) on the Panel's findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning the adequacy and effectiveness of their governance, risk management and internal control frameworks; financial reporting arrangements, and internal and external audit functions. The Panel will do this by reporting to the council's Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on a regular basis through reports and minutes of meetings. It may also report, with the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, to other standing committees on matters that are of direct relevance to the responsibilities of these committees.
34. To report to full council (through the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee) on a regular basis on the Panel's performance in relation to the terms of reference and the effectiveness of the Panel in meeting its purpose.
35. The Audit and Risk Panel shall consider any issue referred to it in relation to these terms of reference by the council or any Standing Committee. Furthermore, the Audit and Risk Panel shall also consider any matter brought to its attention by the Chief Executive. Where any individual Member wishes to raise an issue under these terms of reference, the Member shall accordingly either raise the matter through the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee or in the case of urgency with the Chief Executive.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

The Committee:

- noted the Terms of Reference of the Working Groups;
- agreed the membership of each the Working Groups would be 1 representative from each of the 8 Political Parties on the Council; and
- noted that the Terms of Reference of the Area Working Groups were also being reviewed.

Basic and Responsibility Allowances

The Committee was advised that the Department for Communities had issued a circular, LG 07/2019, which set out revised maximum limits for basic and special responsibility allowances with effect from 1st April, 2019.

The Democratic Services Manager reminded the Committee that, at its meeting in August 2016, it had agreed to apply the increase in the basic allowance from £14,200 per annum to £14,342 with effect from 1st April, 2016 and agreed also the increase in the basic allowance to £14,485 with effect from 1st April, 2017. That had represented a 1% increase for both the 2016 and 2017 years. However, the Council, at its meeting in September 2016, rejected that decision and agreed not to apply any increase in the basic and special responsibility allowances for 2016 and 2017. Since that date, no increase in either the basic or the special responsibility allowance had been approved.

He explained that information received had indicated that all of the other ten local councils had agreed to apply the increases and, therefore, an elected Member in Belfast was currently receiving a lesser basic allowance than Councillors in the other councils. The Committee was requested to consider whether it wished to agree to the increase in the basic allowance to £15,071 per annum with effect from 7th May, 2019 (the date upon which Members of the Council officially took up office after the local elections).

The Committee was also requested to consider whether to apply the revised allocation of the special responsibility allowances, as set out in appendix 3 to the report, with effect from 21st May, 2019 (the date of the Annual Council Meeting). For a number of years, the Council had agreed a split in the special responsibility allowance budget so as to pay both the Chairpersons and the Deputy Chairpersons of the Standing Committees and the Party Officers (Party Leader, Deputy Party Leader and Party Secretary – depending upon Party size). In this new Council Term, there were now eight Parties as opposed to the six we had in the previous Term and therefore there were more Party Officers sharing the overall allowance. If the increase in the overall budget was not applied, then that would mean that the Committee would need to approve a new split of the SRAs. A suggested split was set out in appendix 2 to the report.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Beattie,
Seconded by Councillor Carson,

That the Committee agrees not to increase the basic and special responsibility allowances.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Long,
Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McDonough-Brown),

That the Committee agrees to increase the basic responsibility allowance from £14,200 to £15,057 with effect from 7th May, 2019 but that no increase be applied to the special responsibility allowance (SRA) and that the split for the SRA be as set out in appendix 2.

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

The amendment was thereupon put as the substantive motion, with ten Members voting for and six against and it was declared carried.

Accordingly, a copy of appendix 2 is set out below:

Appendix 2

Allocation of Special Responsibility Allowance – With Additional Party Leaders

Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons

Position	Allowance	Number of posts	Total
Chairpersons	£5,800	6	£34,800
Deputy Chairpersons	£2,900	6	£17,400
Chair BW&UH Cttee	£2,900	1	£2,900
Dep Chair BW&UH Cttee	£1,450	1	£1,450
Total			£56,550

Political Party Officers

Party Leader Basic Allocation	£3,200
Deputy Leader/Secretary Basic Allocation	£2,900
Remainder allocated to Political Party Leaders	£140.83 per Member of the Party

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

Position	Number of Members	Allocation per party Member	Allocation per Party Strength	Basic Allocation	Total
SF Party Leader	18	£140.83	£2,534.94	£3,200	£5,734.94
SF Deputy Leader				£2,900	£2,900
SF Secretary				£2,900	£2,900
DUP Party Leader	15	£140.83	£2,112.45	£3,200	£5,312.45
DUP Deputy Leader				£2,900	£2,900
DUP Secretary				£2,900	£2,900
Alliance Party Leader	10	£140.83	£1,408.30	£3,200	£4,608.30
Alliance Deputy Leader				£2,900	£2,900
SDLP Party Leader	6	£140.83	£844.98	£3,200	£4,044.98
SDLP Deputy Leader				£2,900	£2,900
Green Party Leader	4	£140.83	£563.32	£3,200	£3,763.32
PBPA Leader	3	£140.83	£422.49	£3,200	£3,622.49
UUP Leader	2	£140.83	£281.66	£3,200	£3,481.66
PUP Leader	2	£140.83	£281.66	£3,200	£3,481.66
	60			£43,000	£51,449.98

Total

£107,999.80

Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

City Region Growth Deal – Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To update Committee on the progress of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD).**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked:

- To note the governance and programme arrangements that have been put in place to support the development of the next phase of the BRCD which includes the production of an implementation plan and funding agreement for the delivery of the BRCD programme and associated projects
- To note the next steps on the development of the SOC for the Dublin Rail Connectivity and Economic Corridor.
- To approve the next stages in the delivery of the Belfast Destination Hub including;
 - the establishment of a robust governance structure; the production of a Treasury compliant green book appraisal; development work on potential site identification and a communications plan and
 - the recruitment of a Project Director to lead the development and delivery of the project

3.0 Main report

- 3.1** Members will be aware that a major programme to enable the development of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD), in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), resulted in the submission of the BRCD proposition document to NIO and UK government on 30th September 2018. The proposition outlined approximately 22 projects across the investment pillars of Digital / Innovation, Infrastructure and Tourism led Regeneration underpinned by a significant employability and skills programme, which will provide inclusive job opportunities and significantly enhance the region's economy.
- 3.2** As a result, in his budget on 29th October 2018 the Chancellor announced a commitment of £350m from UK government, leveraging at least £350m from NI regional government, £100m from the BRCD councils and £50m from the two universities to deliver the proposed BRCD programme. This provided a starting funding package of £850m which will be further enhanced by at least £150m private sector investment, providing the BRCD with a 10 year £1billion Programme of Investment.
- 3.3** At the March Committee Members approved the BRCD Heads of Term document which set out the funding commitment for the £850m investment Programme announced by the Chancellor and reflected the programme of investment presented in the BRCD proposition document.

- 3.4 This document was then signed by both governments, the six councils and the two universities, allowing work to progress on the next phase of the development of the programme.

Programme Development - Progress to Date

- 3.5 A key element in developing the BRCD Programme was the governance structures that were put in place to support partnership working and effective decision making at both individual council level and collectively across the programme. This included a Joint Council Forum, comprising Councillors from all six partner Councils and a Programme Board with senior representation from all the partners. These structures have been built upon to support the next phase of delivery with Advisory Boards created for each of the Pillars of Investment to oversee and support the development of Outline Business Cases (OBCs) for each of the BRCD projects.
- 3.6 Significant resources have been committed by all the partner organisations to support the development of the overall programme and individual OBCs. As the accountable body BCC has put in place a programme office which will work across the partnership and with UK Govt and NICS departments to deliver the key documents required for this phase which are
- A Financial Plan and Agreement
 - A Deal Document- detailed document covering all elements included within Heads of terms, including Governance Framework
 - An Implementation Plan- summarising milestones for key deliverables, outputs, resources and risk mitigation for each project
 - Outline Business Cases (OBCs) for the individual BRCD projects
- 3.7 The BRCD programme office will also support the overall management and delivery of the programme as well as developing internal frameworks in areas including;
- Governance and Decision Making
 - Financial Planning and Management
 - Programme and Project Management
 - Performance Monitoring and Assurance
 - Communication and Engagement
- 3.8 Given the scale of the five proposed Innovation projects, the two universities have established a joint programme office to oversee their development and delivery. Based at QUB this programme

office not only demonstrates their commitment to the projects but also to the partnership between the two universities and maximising the benefits across the innovation investment pillar.

- 3.9 The Belfast Met and FE colleges who are leading on the Employability and Skills Programme are about to recruit a Programme Manager to support the development of this pillar. The post will be funded by the colleges and will be located in the BRCD Programme Office in BCC.
- 3.10 In addition the Fraunhofer Institute which is leading the way in digital innovation and smart districts / testbeds, have been appointed to develop an implementation plan for the Digital element of the deal.
- 3.11 The final Investment pillar of Infrastructure is being led by DfI, given they will be solely responsible for the delivery of the projects. As with other strands, BRCD partners will be represented on the Board and progress will be reported in through the current governance structures. A key infrastructure project for the Belfast City Region, which will enhance and compliment the BRCD programme, is the development of the Dublin Rail Connectivity and Economic Corridor. In January 2019 the City Growth and Regeneration Committee approved the commissioning of a 'Stage 2 Strategic Outline Business Case' for an improved rail network between Belfast and Dublin offering 60 minute journey times, improved level of service and significant improvements in air quality and long term environmental impact. Members are asked to note that funding will be matched from private and public contribution to progress the Strategic Outline Business Case with an expected completion of the work in October 2019. Belfast City Council contribution will be met from within current departmental budgets in line with previous approvals.
- 3.12 Belfast Destination Hub
- BCC is also putting in place specific resources to progress the Destination Hub, which is a key project under the tourism strand of the deal. Within the BRCD, the Destination Hub mirrors the ambition of the Belfast Agenda to a deliver a second world-class visitor attraction to generate additional tourist spend and footfall in the city centre. The Destination Hub proposal is for a single site in the city centre incorporating a range of facilities including the 'Belfast Story' visitor destination, a Northern Ireland film centre, gallery and exhibition space and a digital media/skills training facility.
- 3.13 Members will recall at its meeting 17th August 2018 the project moved from Stage 2 – Uncommitted on the Capital programme and

an Outline Business Case was completed. The UK Treasury has now published its guidelines on the required Green Book economic appraisals required for each project within the Infrastructure, Tourism, Regeneration and Employability and Skills BRCD pillars – including the Belfast Destination Hub. In line with Treasury recommendations, and in recognition of a project of this scale, scope and complexity, it is now necessary to move forward with a new phase of development that comprise of a number of work strands. Currently this includes the establishment of a robust governance structure with strategic partners such as Tourism NI, NI Screen, National Museums of NI and the Department of Finance; the production of a Treasury compliant green book appraisal; development work on potential site identification and a communications plan to include further concept development with a strategic communications framework. To deliver a project of this magnitude for the city and the region, it will be necessary to allocate the necessary resources to deliver the work strands and for the appointment of a Project Director on a three year fixed term contract to drive the project forward. Members should note that all costs associated with these work strands and the appointment of a Project Director are to come from existing resources.

3.14 Next Steps – Member Engagement

As with phase 1 of the Programme individual councils will be responsible for all decisions relating to investment in their individual projects and in Belfast SP&R will continue to receive regular updates on the both the council's projects and the overall programme. Members from all six councils will also continue to meet through a Joint Members' Forum and it is proposed the next meeting of this will be held in September 2019. Proposed arrangements for this meeting will be brought to the August Committee meeting.

3.15 Financial & Resource Implications

All costs associated with the BRCD are within existing budgets.

3.16 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The Approach taken to develop the City Deal has been subject to independent equality screening and rural proofing and states that;

BRCD is inherently inclusive, affording an opportunity for the region to grow in a way that will benefit the economy of Northern Ireland as a whole, thereby enhancing the lives and well-being of its citizens. If during further development of the programme it becomes apparent that there may be an adverse impact on certain groups or communities then the partnership commits to carrying

out further Section 75 work and including screening and EQIAs as and when appropriate.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Customer Focus Programme – Update

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted for the Committee’s consideration the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 Members are reminded that in March 2019 Committee considered proposals for the Customer Focus Programme and agreed the implementation approach, key milestones of the implementation plan, the programme workstreams and the resource requirements that will be necessary to successfully take forward the programme of work.

1.2 This report provides an update on activity during the last quarter and seeks support to progress a number of elements including the establishment of a mechanism to involve elected members in the design of the Customer Hub to ensure Members’ needs are met.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- 1. Approve the establishment of a cross party task and finish group to engage with the Customer Focus programme to represent Members’ needs throughout the design and implementation phases of the programme. A draft Terms of Reference for the task and finish group is attached at Appendix 1.**
- 2. Approve the use of the ‘Nextdoor’ social media platform as a pilot to assess its effectiveness and potential as part of the Customer Hub design.**
- 3. Note progress during the last quarter including the appointment of a Customer Services Manager and the award of contract for the Strategic Delivery Partner.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Elected Member Engagement in the Customer Focus Programme

The Customer Hub will deal with customer contact for all departments and services, across all channels (online, mobile, telephone, face-to-face, email, social media) and will oversee the introduction of a single telephone number for the Council.

3.2 A key focus in the design of the Customer Hub will be a streamlined process to proactively manage the information requirements of elected members. It is important that, during the design and implementation phases, elected members are engaged in the design process. It is therefore proposed that a cross party task and finish group is established to provide insight and guidance regarding Members' requirements to influence the design of the Customer Hub and the channels therein. A draft Terms of Reference has been circulated.

3.3 Appointment of Customer Services Manager

Integral to the overall Customer Focus programme will be the design and implementation of the Customer Hub including staffing and operation. The post of Customer Services Manager is seen as critical to the successful operation of the hub and therefore recruitment of the post was a priority. Members are advised that the post has been recruited successfully.

3.4 Proposed Pilot of Nextdoor

The design of the Customer Hub will include a review of how social media channels are managed from both corporate and service delivery perspectives. A new channel called 'Nextdoor' has emerged in recent years and is growing in use in Neighbourhoods in Belfast (currently 20,000+ members). Nextdoor is a website and app for neighbourhoods connecting people with their neighbours to build stronger, safer and happier communities. Residents use Nextdoor for a variety of things but some of the most popular are to discuss local issues, get recommendations and to get to know their neighbours. The tool is used effectively to tackle growing issues in communities such as fighting loneliness among older people and setting up self-help groups.

3.5 This platform differs from other social media platforms in that it is geographically based, it has a residents' only membership and is moderated within neighbourhoods by local residents. Nextdoor has clear community guidelines that stop negative behaviour like trolling or aggressive language. As every Nextdoor member must be a verified local resident using their real name, negative behaviour is unusual.

3.6 Nextdoor provides public service with a free tool to communicate and engage directly with residents with every account having unlimited user accounts for staff. Public service accounts cannot see residents' posts but they can see responses to their posts as well as receive private messages. Posts can be targeted to local area e.g. ward or DEA.

Photographs, videos and other documentation can be attached to posts. Types of posts can include general information, polls, an event or urgent alerts, for example:

- Public services can use the polling feature to get resident feedback about concerns and priorities. Residents can only vote once and are verified as living in the ward.
- Urgent alerts are messages that appear as app notifications, emails and if residents have signed up for the service, a SMS text message.

Members may be aware that PSNI has recently committed to using the platform regionally.

3.7 We have received a proposal from Nextdoor for Belfast City Council's use of the platform for publishing public service messages. It is proposed that Council assesses the use and effectiveness of Nextdoor on a pilot basis as part of the design of the Customer Hub.

3.8 Award of contract for Strategic Delivery Partner

The Council needs to make savings, increase efficiency and also meet the expectations of the city's citizens in delivering services which are centred on their needs. To fast track implementation, we have procured a strategic delivery partner to assist with the design and implementation of a corporate approach to Customer Management. The contract has been awarded to PA Consulting. The role of the strategic delivery partner will include:

1. Design and implementation of a Multi-Channel Customer Hub, taking a 'wide and thin' approach to managing customer services.
2. Delivering a business process review of Cleansing and Waste services to facilitate a 'digital first' approach to agile user-centred service design.
3. Transfer of knowledge to allow the Council to continue service design in other areas.
4. Programme oversight to ensure projects align with established design principles ensuring seamless UX (User Experience) design and integration.

3.9 Workstream Update

The technical workstreams of the Customer Focus programme (Website, CRM and Integration) are at the initial stages of development and focus in the last quarter has been on researching

the market, defining requirements and our approach to procurement.

The Service Design and Implementation workstream continues to work on coordinating the programme of change across the organisation ensuring alignment of objectives and will, with the appointment of the strategic delivery partner, focus on development of our agile service design approach to transformation in order to make significant and accelerated progress to meet the key aims of the programme. A key part of this process, will be to involve our staff at all stages of the design and to ensure that communications on any impacts will be clear and timely.

Workstream definitions have been circulated.

3.10 Financial & Resource Implications

SP&R agreed in November 2017 to establish a specified reserve to finance the customer focus programme.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Implications

Work on the EQIA and Rural Needs Assessment for the Customer Focus Programme has been initiated.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations..

Strengthening the role of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector in Community Planning

The Committee deferred consideration of the report to enable discussions to be undertaken with the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships and to a further reported being submitted to the August meeting.

Corporate Plan 2019-23

The Committee was informed that the Corporate Plan was a key governance document, cited in the council’s constitution, as the means by which the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee sets the strategic direction of the council. It sets out what the council wants to achieve for the city and the key priority actions to make this happen.

A four year (2017 – 21) corporate plan was approved by the Committee on 23rd June 2017, with the agreement that it would be updated annually. This four year period was to align the corporate plan to the Belfast Agenda (the city’s first community plan). However, given the recent local government election, it was important that the new Council was given the opportunity to shape the new corporate plan and set clear priorities.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

In order to form a starting base for Members to consider, a draft corporate plan had been prepared. This draft was based on the priorities the Council had committed to in the Belfast Agenda; the priorities set by the previous Council; and the analysis of the social, economic and environmental needs of the city.

To facilitate Member input into the corporate plan, it was recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agrees to host an all Member workshop in August that would focus on the priorities for the Council. It was also anticipated that further discussion would take place during the Party Group Leader planning session in September.

Following that workshop, a redrafted corporate plan would be brought to the Committee in September before commencing a public consultation process. Following that process, the priorities agreed would be used as a basis for the rate setting process.

The Committee noted the draft corporate plan for 2019-23, agreed to the ongoing process that would enable Members to further develop this draft to fully reflect the Council's priorities and agreed to the holding of a workshop for all Members of the Council on 8th August at 5.00p.m.

Council Improvement Plan

The Strategic Director of City and Organisational Strategy submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update Members on results of the public consultation on the draft council improvement objectives and to present the draft Council Improvement Plan 2019 - 2020 for Committee approval and publication.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to

- Approve the draft 2019-20 Council Improvement Plan. A draft was presented to SP&R Committee in February and draft improvement objectives agreed for public consultation. As council is legally required to publish its improvement plan by 30th June, Members are also asked to authorise its publication on the council's website subject to formal ratification by Council on 1st July.**

3.0 Key Issues

3.1 Background

The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 introduced a duty on councils to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the

exercise of their functions. As a result, we are required to consult residents on our proposed improvement objectives and to publish an annual Improvement Plan setting out the agreed improvement objectives for the year ahead and our arrangements to achieve them. In February, SP&R approved six draft improvement objectives, aligned to the Belfast Agenda, which we issued for public consultation:

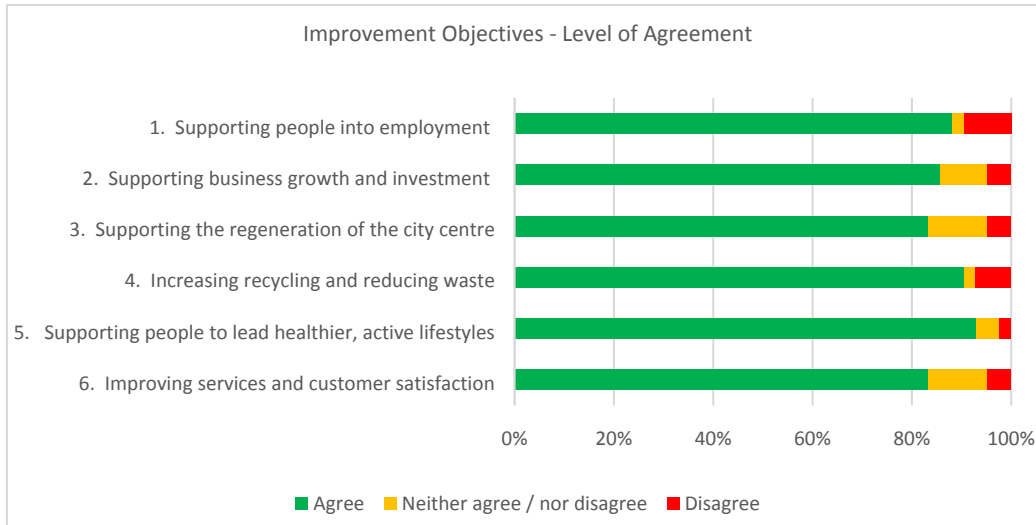
Working & Learning
1. We will support people into employment
Growing the Economy
2. We will support investment and business growth in the city
City Development
3. We will support the regeneration of the city centre
4. We will increase levels of household recycling and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill
Living Here
5. We will support people to lead healthier more active lives
A Fit for Purpose Organisation
6. We will improve council services and increase customer satisfaction with council

3.2 Consultation Responses

The consultation ran for a period of 6 weeks and received 43 responses, an increase from last year. The majority of those responding to the consultation supported the proposed improvement objectives - see table 1. Where respondents did disagree, comments suggest that this was largely because they felt council should be focusing on core services rather than doing what they seen as 'the job of other organisations'. In the case of the waste and recycling objective, although some respondents said they disagreed with this objective, their comments suggest that they disagreed with the proposed approach to reducing waste rather than the objective itself. When we broke down the level of agreement in more detail, recycling, supporting healthier lifestyles and customer care improvements showed the highest levels of 'strongly agree'.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

Table 1



3.3 When asked to submit ideas for improving the objectives or to suggest other areas for improvement, around half (22 respondents) provided comments. Although these comments varied widely, respondents mentioned the environment / sustainable development and encouraging active travel the most frequently. Other suggested issues included addressing anti-social behaviour, supporting people in poverty, better support for people with disabilities and better support for mental health. These issues, most of which require a partnership effort, will be addressed through the Belfast Agenda or are reflected in the council’s new Corporate Plan.

3.4 Improvement Plan 2019 – 20

The high levels of support, as evidenced by the consultation, indicate that the proposed improvement objectives are relevant and appropriate. However, in response to the feedback we have updated the health related improvement objective to include active travel related actions. The objectives have now been incorporated within a formal Council Improvement Plan, which is supported by an internal operational plan that details the key deliverables for the year ahead. The draft Improvement Plan is attached at appendix 1 for approval.

Council must publish its Improvement Plan by 30th June each year. Given that the local government elections meant that the draft plan could not be brought to committee before now, Members of the SP&R Committee are asked to approve the attached plan and to authorise its publication on the council website by 28th June. In order to meet our statutory deadline, the plan will

therefore be published subject to formal ratification by full Council on 1st July.

3.5 Financial and Resource Implications

The Improvement Plan has already been reflected in the formal planning and budgeting processes of council; there are no resource implications contained in this report.

3.6 Equality and Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs assessment

There are no direct equality or rural need implications contained in this report.”

The Committee:

- approved the draft 2019-20 Council Improvement Plan, subject to the removal of references to MIPIM as an indicator;
- noted that a draft had been presented to the Committee in February and draft improvement objectives had been agreed for public consultation; and
- agreed, as the Council was legally required to publish its improvement plan by 30th June, to authorise its publication on the council's website subject to formal ratification by Council on 1st July.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Physical Programme Update

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The Council's Physical Programme covers over 200 live regeneration projects across a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, Leisure Transformation Programme, Belfast Investment Fund, Local Investment Fund, Social Outcomes Fund and the projects which the Council is delivering on behalf of other agencies. This report highlights the status of projects under the Programme along with projects recommended to be moved Stages.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to –

- note the update on the Physical Programme as at 3.1 below and that the Property & Projects Department is happy to

arrange a site visit to any projects that have been completed and/or are underway.

- note that it is proposed that a series of Party Group Briefings on the Physical Programme are undertaken in August to update Members on the status of projects under the Programme along with the emerging implications for future investment decisions and in particular the potential impact on the district rate.. These will be delivered in conjunction with the Director of Finance & Resources.

Proposed movements

- note that satisfactory tender returns have now been achieved for two IT projects (the IT Programme – Asset Management System and the Customer Focus Programme – New Telephony System) and that it is recommended that a maximum budget of up to £150,000 is now allocated per project. The Director of Finance & Resources has confirmed that this is within the affordability limits of the Council.

Project Updates

- agree in principle to the transfer of Paisley Park from DFC to the Council following completion of any upgrade works by DFC and subject to this being in line with the Council's agreed policy on the transfer of assets.

Non-recurrent projects

- note that the incremental nature of the capital programme allows the Council the opportunity to allocate an element of the 2019/2020 capital financing budget to finance a number of one-off (non-recurrent) projects within year. It is recommended that this is focused on progressing projects which the Council is required to take forward either from a health and safety perspective and/or a legislative perspective.
- agree that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate 'framework' arrangements) be initiated for any non-recurrent projects for 2019/2020 as required, with contracts to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

- 3.1** The Council's Capital Programme is a significant regeneration programme of investment across the city, which improves the existing Council assets or provides new council facilities.

An update on the key projects under the various programme is outlined below;

Completed Projects

- Pitches Programme at Ulidia Playing Fields
- Upgrades to parks, open spaces and playgrounds – including the refurbished playgrounds at Hammer, Glenbank, Duncairn and Fullerton
- Corporate Projects - including Fleet Replacement Programme for 2018/19 and a range of ICT projects
- In addition 18 projects were completed under LIF for FY 2018/19; 2 BIF projects completed (Davitts GAC and Raidió Fáilte) and 2 SOF projects (Assembly Buildings Conference Centre and James Connolly Interpretative Centre)

Projects currently underway

- *Leisure Programme – Andersonstown, Lisnasharragh and Brook – works are underway on these centres*
- *Pitches Programme at Blanchflower Playing Fields*
- *Navarra Place (MUGA programme Phase 2)*
- *Upgrades to playgrounds - including playground refurbishment at Barnett and Orangefield Park*
- In addition, various projects are currently underway under LIF; 4 BIF projects (Grace Family Centre, Cancer Lifeline, H&W Welders Football Club and Colin Glen Trust) and an SOF project - Rock Centre.

- 3.2** Members are asked to note that the Property & Projects Department is happy to arrange site visits for Members/ Party Groups to any capital programme project.

- 3.3** Members have been advised that the Physical Programme is under increasing pressure in terms of overall affordability and Members are asked to agree that a series of Party Group Briefings on the Physical Programme are undertaken in August to update Members on the status of projects under the Programme along with the emerging implications for future investment decisions and in particular the potential impact on the district rate. These will be

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

delivered in conjunction with the Director of Finance & Resources in terms of affordability.

Proposed Movements

3.4 Members have previously agreed that all capital projects must go through a 3 Stage process where decisions on which projects progress are taken by SP&R. Members are asked to note the following movements on the Capital Programme.

3.5 **IT Programme- Asset Management System**

Moved to Stage 3- Committed- Tier 0 Scheme at Risk	20 April 2018
Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)	Gerry Millar
Client Department	Property & Projects
Final Budget	Up to a maximum of £150,000

Members will be aware that prior to local government organisation in 2015 the Council already owned and managed a substantial estate. This was significantly enhanced under LGR with addition of assets which transferred from Lisburn and Castlereagh. Due to the growing estate there is a requirement for the Council to have a fit-for-purpose corporate asset management system to support the strategic objectives of better financial management, information management, planning and performance and asset management.

SP&R at its meeting on 20th April 2018 agreed that the project should proceed to 'Stage 3 - Committed - Tier 0- Scheme at Risk' pending a satisfactory tender return at which stage the final budget would be brought back to Committee. Members are asked to note that a satisfactory tender return within affordability limits has been received and the Outline Business Case (OBC) has been reviewed internally and no major issues have been identified. It is therefore recommended that the IT Programme – Asset Management System project is now progressed with a maximum budget of £150,000 to be allocated. The Director of Finance & Resources has confirmed that this is within the affordability limits of the Council.

3.6 **IT Programme- Customer Focus**

Moved to Stage 3- Committed- Tier 0 Scheme at Risk	March 2019
Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)	Ronan Cregan
Client Department	Finance & Resources
Final Budget	Up to a maximum of £150,000

Members will be aware that Council have approved an ambitious Customer Focus Programme, which will deliver Council services differently, in a more integrated way that is focused on the needs of the people. In March 2019 the SP&R Committee noted that an integral part of the Customer Focus Programme is the necessary technology requirements and back up including, among other elements, a new telephony solution to deliver customer focus requirements, new website design and content management system, new integration platform, mobile application development platform and internet service resilience. It was agreed that the IT requirements for the Customer Focus Programme would be brought forward as a programme with the individual elements to be brought back to Committee for a final investment decision following the tender process and confirmation that this was within the affordability limits of the Council.

Members are asked to note that a satisfactory tender return has now been achieved for the first element of the Programme, a new telephony solution, and it is recommended that this is now progressed with a maximum budget of £150,000 to be allocated. The Director of Finance & Resources has confirmed that this is within the affordability limits of the Council.

Project Updates

- 3.7 Members will be aware that the Council has received £3.1m under the Peace IV Local Action Plan for capital works under the Shared Spaces & Services element. The focus of this work is on a triangle at the Springfield Dam, Springvale Park and Paisley Park. Members will be aware that both Springfield Dam and Paisley Park are DFC assets but it has previously been agreed that Springfield Dam will transfer to the Council upon completion of the upgrade works which are being match-funded by DFC. Members are asked to note that DFC have now written formally to the Council to propose that Paisley Park is also transferred to the Council in the same manner as Springfield Dam i.e. that DFC undertake the necessary upgrade works and it is transferred to the Council once these are completed. The exact nature of the upgrade works has still to be agreed but that this could cover the football and bowling facilities and a 3G pitch.
- 3.8 Members are asked to agree in principle to the transfer of Paisley Park to the Council subject to further discussions with DFC and subject to this being in line with the Council's agreed policy on the transfer of assets. In considering this Members are asked to note that this is an important component of the overall peace project and is a key asset in the local area which has been under-invested in over the years. As a sports facility this aligns to the Council's

wider objective and will add to the overall objectives of the Peace project. Members are also asked to note that the Council already maintains the Park through an SLA with DFC.

Capital Programme and Capital Financing – Non-recurrent projects

3.9 Members are asked to note that the Council incurs both capital expenditure and capital financing costs in the delivery of its Capital Programme.

- Capital Expenditure is the expenditure incurred in the actual delivery of contracts e.g. the actual payments to the contractor for a construction contract
- Capital Financing is the method the council uses to fund the capital expenditure. The capital financing costs include loan repayments (principle and interest); revenue contributions (cash payments to repay or avoid taking out loans); capital receipts and external funding.

3.10 The phased impact of the capital programme on the capital financing budget provides the opportunity for the council to allocate an element of the 2019/2020 capital financing budget to finance a number of one-off (non-recurrent) projects within year. There are a number of proposals which the Council is required to take forward either from a health and safety perspective and/or a legislative perspective and it is recommended that these are taken forward using non-recurrent capital financing. These include upgrades to a number of council facilities to ensure DDA compliance, fleet investment to ensure the Council's fleet estate remains 'fit for purpose' and on the road in order to ensure continued service delivery and new mobile ventilation units for St. George's Market.

3.11 Members are asked to agree that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate 'framework' arrangements) be initiated for the any non-recurrent projects for 2019.2020 as required with contracts to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver

3.12 **Financial & Resource Implications**

Financial -- IT programme- Asset Management System - that a maximum budget of up to £150,000 is ring-fenced for this project.

IT Programme – Customer Focus – New Telephony System - that a maximum budget of up to £150,000 is ring-fenced for this project.

The Director of Finance and Resources has confirmed that these allocations are within the affordability limits of the Council.

Resources – Officer time to deliver as required and staff resources to deliver the IT projects system and non-recurrent projects

3.13 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

No implications.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Assets Management

Tullycarnet Park – Pavilion and Bowling Green

The Committee granted a land lease to Tullycarnet Action Group Initiative Boxing Club (TAGIT) for the purpose of constructing a new boxing club facility on the council lands.

Beechvale Farm – Proposed disposal

The Committee approved the appointment of an agent for the marketing of Beechvale Farm and noted that, following receipt of offers, a report would be brought back to the Committee.

**Cregagh Youth and Community Centre –
Licence to Ulster Rugby for occasional use of
overflow car park**

The Committee granted a 9-month Licence to Ulster Rugby for their occasional use of the overflow car park adjacent to Cregagh Youth and Community Centre.

Ravenhill Rest Gardens – Environmental Improvements

The Committee approved the demolition of the former toilet block and to enter into a licence with Communities NI to undertake the demolition redevelopment landscape works and a maintenance agreement for a period of up to three years.

Cromac Street Car Park – Licence agreement renewal

The Committee approved a licence agreement renewal with NIHE for the Council operated off street car park at Cromac Street.

The Ulster Hall, 34 Bedford Street, Belfast

The Committee agreed to enter into a Crane Oversailing Agreement with McAleer & Rushe Contracts UK Limited, for the purposes of their Contractor carrying out works on their new Bedford Square Development opposite the Ulster Hall.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

**River Terrace – Lease of land to Lower
Ormeau Residents Association Group**

The Committee agreed to the lease of land to LORAG by way of a 25 year lease for the purposes of a community garden facility.

**Avoniel Play Centre – Proposed temporary
relocation to the Diamond Project**

The Committee agreed to a Licence Agreement with Charter NI for the provision of accommodation at 32 Constance Street BT54QF for services displaced from the BCC Avoniel Play Centre, with the licence to run until 31st March 2021.

Finance, Resources and Procurement

**BCC Assurance Framework and
Annual Governance Statement**

The Committee considered the undernoted report;

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this paper is twofold;

- to explain to Members the key elements of the ‘year-end’ process and the ‘assurance framework’ that the Council has developed over recent years to help ensure that the Council complies with statutory requirements and Members and senior officers can have effective, ongoing oversight of the Council’s governance and assurance arrangements, including the annual report of the Audit & Risk Panel for 18/19.
- to present the Annual Governance Statement for 2018/19, for consideration and inclusion in the unaudited statement of accounts which will be certified by the Chief Financial Officer by 30 June 2019 and then subject to NIAO audit. The Statement has been considered by the Audit Assurance Board, but has not been reviewed by the Audit & Risk Panel as it has not been possible for the Panel to meet in June due to the timing of the nominations process following the elections. The Statement should now be approved by the Committee Chair, the Chief Executive and the Chief Financial Officer.

1.2 The Annual Governance Statement is an important document and it is important that the Committee is fully aware of its contents. The disclosures in the statement are based upon the Council’s corporate risk register and take into consideration the disclosures

made by Chief Officers in their individual annual assurance statements. The Annual Governance Statement also incorporates a summary of the Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Service's annual assurance statement.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the Council's Assurance Framework and note the annual report of the Audit & Risk Panel for 18/19.

Members are asked to review and approve the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2018/19 and, in particular, the disclosure of the significant governance issues contained in the statement.

2.2 Following review, the statement will be incorporated into the Council's unaudited financial statements for 2018/19 which will be certified by the Chief Financial Officer by 30 June 2019. It will be subject to review by the LGA (NIAO) as part of their annual audit.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

The Council's Assurance Framework is summarised at Appendix A. It shows how different sources of assurance and related key elements / control measures combine to enable the Council to monitor its governance arrangements and produce the evidence to support its Annual Governance Statement. The diagram shows how the Council's Audit & Risk Panel, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and Council provide oversight of these governance arrangements. Related to this, the annual report of the Audit & Risk Panel for 18/19 is at Appendix B.

3.2 Preparation of Annual Governance Statement

The Council has a statutory responsibility to annually prepare and publish an Annual Governance Statement as part of the Financial Report. Many different processes inform the preparation of the Statement as can be seen from the Assurance Framework at Appendix A. Specifically, the Annual Governance Statement sets out:

- scope of the responsibility of the Council in relation to governance
- the purpose of the governance framework
- the governance framework that is actually in place
- the review of effectiveness of the governance framework that has taken place

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

- an update on the significant governance issues that were disclosed last year
 - significant governance issues to be disclosed for year-end 2019 and the action proposed to address them.
- 3.3 The Statement for 2018/19 is presented at Appendix C and should be approved by the Chair of Strategic Policy and Resources, the Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources.
- 3.4 It will be incorporated into the unaudited statement of accounts which will be certified by the Chief Financial Officer by 30 June 2019. It is subject to review by the LGA (NIAO) as part of their annual audit.
- 3.5 **Financial & Resource Implications**
- None.
- 3.6 **Equality or Good Relations Implications**
- None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Contracts Update

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 award the most economically advantageous tender;
- agreed to accede to Standing Order 55(b) - exceptions in relation to contracts by direction of the council acting on recommendation of a Chief Officer - that the exception is justified in special circumstances for the contracts set out in 3.6 and Appendix 1 Table 2;
- approved the extensions as detailed in Appendix 1, Table 3;
- noted the contracts that have been awarded (January – May 2019 inclusive) Appendix 1, Table 4; and
- noted that the Committee had delegated authority in relation to the award of contracts.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

Appendix 1 - Schedule of tenders for consideration

Table 1 - New tenders

Title of tender	Senior Responsible Officer	Proposed contract duration
Tender for the provision of a bring site service	Nigel Grimshaw	Two years with optional extension of anytime up to two years and a further two years thereafter
Tender for the provision of a dry material recovering facility	Nigel Grimshaw	Three years with the option to extend for a further two years.
Delivery of parks education programme	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to five years
Supply and delivery of waste containers and food waste liners	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to three years
Supply & delivery of Fruit & Veg to Belfast Zoo	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to three years
Supply & delivery of bedding plants and supply & delivery & offloading of forcing and bedding bulbs	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to three years
Provision of de-icing and snow clearance (winter) service	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to three years
Supply, delivery and offloading of haylage, meadow hay and barley straw	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to four years
Annual Bituman including small civil engineering works	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to four years
MTC for roller shutter doors – repair, maintenance and minor alterations	Gerry Millar	One year with the option to extend for a further three years

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

MTC for general metal and small engineering - callout repairs and minor works	Gerry Millar	One year with the option to extend for a further three years
MTC for glazing – callout, repairs and minor works	Gerry Millar	One year with the option to extend for a further three years
MTC for air conditioning – callout ,repairs and minor works	Gerry Millar	One year with the option to extend for a further two years
MTC for electrical insurance repairs and small works	Gerry Millar	One year with the option to extend for a further two years
MTC for pitch lighting – callout, repairs and minor works	Gerry Millar	One year with the option to extend for a further two years
MTC for roofing services – callout, repairs and minor works	Gerry Millar	One year with the option to extend for a further two years
Supply and delivery of footwear and gloves	Gerry Millar	One year with the option to extend for a further two years
Supply and delivery of electrical materials	Gerry Millar	One year with the option to extend for a further three years
Supply and delivery of plastic sacks	Gerry Millar	One year with the option to extend for a further three years
Resurface main yard at Cregagh Civic Amenity Centre	Gerry Millar	4-8 weeks
Boiler replacement at Morton CC & Belvoir Acitivity	Gerry Millar	8-12 weeks
Upgrade fire alarm at waste transfer station	Gerry Millar	4-8 weeks

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

Replacement of flooring at Ballysillan LC	Gerry Millar	2-4 weeks
Installation of Christmas lights at City Hall	Gerry Millar	12 weeks
Repairs to roofing at Smithfield Market	Gerry Millar	4-6 weeks
CHP Works at Ballysillan Leisure Centre	Gerry Millar	Up to five years
Analysis of samples from the North Foreshore	Gerry Millar	Up to three years
Online Business Case 2 for Belfast Destination Hub	Alistair Reid	Up to one year
Strategic Engagement Framework for Belfast Destination Hub	Alastair Reid	Up to one year
Project concept development for Belfast Destination Hub	Alastair Reid	Up to two years
Tender for the delivery of two summer lighting pilots	Alastair Reid	Up to one year
Tender for proposal for a festival of light to animate Belfast City Centre throughout Xmas 2019	Alastair Reid	Up to one year
Employment Academy – Leisure (T1976)	Alastair Reid	Up to three years
Purchase of mobile ventilation units for St Georges Market	Alastair Reid	Up to ten years

Table 2 - Direct Award Contracts (Single Tender Action)

System/Product	Supplier	Annual estimate
Finance & Resouces: maintenance and support for Modern.Gov software (T1969)	Modern Mindset	£38,750

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

Place & Economy City Revitalisation Programme support for a number of key activities	Festival of Fool's/Cathedral Quarter/Other Voices	£70,000
Place & Economy City Revitalisation Programme: marketing campaign (T1970)	Visit Belfast	£300,000
City & Neighbourhoods: removal of a portacabin (T1971)	confidential	confidential
City & Neighbourhoods: seasonal waste removal 2018 (T1972)	confidential	confidential
City & Neighbourhoods: seasonal waste removal 2019 (T1982)	Confidential	confidential
Research and Evidence to inform the Local Development Plan (T1973)	Turley and Edge Analytics	£42,500

Table 3 - Contract Extension

System/Product	Supplier	Period
Tender for the collection, treatment and re-cycling of mattresses	Ulster Supported Employment Ltd	Month by month until new contract is in place.

Table 4 – Tenders Awarded (January to May 2019)

Title of tender	Successful Contractor	Senior Responsible Officer
Supply and delivery of ambient food (T1918)	Henderson Foodservice Ltd	John Walsh
Supply and delivery of kerbside sort vehicles (T1932)	Romanquip Ltd	Nigel Grimshaw

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

Provision of a personal development project - PEACE IV (T1920)	Extern NI	Nigel Grimshaw
Supply and delivery of top dressing sand and topsoil (T1877)	Clive Richardson Ltd	Nigel Grimshaw
Tender for wet pour repairs (T1878)	Play and Leisure Services Ltd	Nigel Grimshaw
Administration and provision of first aid training courses (T1911)	Proparamedics Ltd	John Walsh
Provision of a medical referee service (T1875)	Dr Smith	Nigel Grimshaw
Removal and disposal of sharps and drug paraphernalia (T1894)	Ace Drains	Nigel Grimshaw
Good relations through sport – PEACE IV (T1925)	Active Communities Network	Nigel Grimshaw
Supply and delivery of fresh meat and poultry (T1929)	Lynas Foodservice Ltd	John Walsh
Maintenance of grounds maintenance plant and equipment (T1913)	Broderick Grass Machinery Ltd	Nigel Grimshaw
Delivery of care employment academy (T1931)	DFPF Ltd t/a People 1st	Nigel Grimshaw
Supply and erection of street nameplates (T1935)	Traffic Signs and Equipment Ltd	Alistair Reid
Maintenance and removal of flower displays (T1870)	Clive Richardson Ltd	Nigel Grimshaw
Design, delivery and management of twilight market (T1957)	The Event-ful consultancy	John Greer
Advertising service for the placement of planning notices (T1898b)	Independent News and Media Ltd	Aidan Thatcher

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

End of Year Absence

The Committee considered a report in relation to the end of year absence rates for 2018/19.

At the end of March 2019, the average number of day's sickness absence per full time employee was 13.71 days. The Council did not meet its target to reduce sickness absence to 10 days. However, the rate did not increase on last year's (13.72) rate, rather there was a marginal reduction. There was an increase in the number of staff with no absence this year, 38.75% compared to 37.04% last year. Long term absence increased this year with 67.44% of absence classified as long term absence compared to 64.20% for the same time last year.

The number of days lost per full time equivalent was slightly less in quarter four (3.47 days) when compared to quarter three (3.55 days). The quarterly comparison chart showed a significant improvement in the quarter four absence rate this year when compared to the same period last year (3.92 days).

The report provided details on the disability related absence; stress related absence; and for Musculo-skeletal related absence for 2018/19. In addition, the report highlighted the initiatives introduced and various programmes for employees in order to assist to reduce sickness absence.

The Committee was advised that, in recent years, a corporate target of 10 days had been set and this figure remained as the target for the Council's absence rates. It had been recognised, however, that this target was difficult for larger departments to achieve in one step in the course of a single year.

In order to recognise the significant efforts being made to reduce absence levels and achievements in some areas, and taking account of the significant organisational change ongoing, it was proposed that departments continue to work towards a target of 10 days, to be achieved by the end of the current Council term, that is, by the end of March 2023. It was hoped that a more achievable target for all departments, that is, one based on an annual percentage reduction might provide more of a realistic incentive for departments to strive towards and could be applied across the board down to service or section level. A proposed reduction of 7.59%* would mean the following targets for each year until 2023.

19/20	12.67
20/21	11.71
21/22	10.82
22/23	10

*A review of the target each year is required as it is based on a percentage reduction of the previous year.

The committee noted the contents of the report and agreed the proposed corporate target.

Equality and Good Relations

Equality and Diversity: Quarter 4 Equality Screening and Rural Needs Outcome Report

The Committee was advised that one of the main requirements of the Council's Equality Scheme was to carry out the screening of new and revised policies. That allowed any impacts related to equality of opportunity and/or good relations to be identified and addressed.

In addition, the Council now had a statutory duty under the Rural Needs (NI) Act 2016 to consider rural needs in the development of new policies, plans or strategies or in any service design/delivery decisions and was required to ensure that the annual reporting returns were submitted to Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

The Committee noted the summary of equality screening and rural needs impact assessments which had been undertaken from January till March, 2019.

Update on Statue Gifted by Stena Line

The Members were reminded that the Council, at its meeting in March 2019, had agreed to accept the gift of a statue representing non-violence from The Olsson family, founders and owners of Stena Line. The owner supports many causes and charities, including the Non-Violence Project Foundation. The family was interested in exploring a potential initiative with the City of Belfast.

The symbol for this was the famous statue by Carl Reutersvärd, which, among other places, was situated in front of the United Nations building in New York. That statue is a well-known symbol of peace and non-violence.

While it might initially appear that the image of the "knotted gun" does not sit comfortably within the Belfast context, the Members might wish to note the statue can be customised to meet local needs / issues and it can be colourful and vibrant. However, given the Belfast context - a city moving out of conflict and which is being regenerated, not just centrally but in local communities with the aim of promoting connection and cohesion, the Council considered Girdwood as an appropriate place to site the statue.

The representatives from Stena Line were impressed with the history and the development of the site. The building of a shared space in a previously contested area, the development of a further phase to continue the work at the site and beyond including linkages to a major arterial route were factors, which they recognised sat with the aims of the project as well as providing natural local connections with any potential programme.

As the Council had agreed to the above request, the company have stated that they would be willing to invest significant funds in a programme for children and young people through schools which would look at non-violence. They had advised that they would wish the Council to take the lead on this initiative. The Members would be aware that the Council was currently supporting a number of programmes through PEACE IV but these were confined to afterschool activities as stipulated by the funding conditions.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

In the interim, officers had met with representatives from the Education Authority (EA) who were responsible for Shared Education and the suggestion would be that a partnership approach be undertaken. That would mean that, in addition to the financial contribution from Stena Line, resources could be accessed from the Shared Education Programme through the EA. The Council had already agreed that funding from the Council's Good Relations Action Plan be directed towards a schools intervention programme.

In implementing this approach, it would deliver a flexibility to work with schools/groups on a single identity basis, reduce the risk of duplication, increase the significance of the programme and meant that ongoing support and progression could continue which would result in the projects being mainstreamed – a more sustainable approach.

Such an approach would require the Council and the EA to enter into a partnership agreement and Members were asked to give approval for officers to progress this agreement, subject to input from Legal services and approval from the Education Authority.

It should be noted that progress reports on the programme would be brought to the Shared City Partnership in the first instance and then through the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

The unveiling of the statue would take place in Girdwood on 13th September 2019 from 11am - 12pm. It was envisaged that the Lord Mayor and Mr Olssen would undertake the unveiling. In advance of the event, a creative programme was being organised with young people who use Girdwood to ensure their participation and understanding around shared space and the reason behind the statue. Panels would also be developed to tell the story of Girdwood and the background to the statue to give the piece context. The Lord Mayor would also host a visit for Mr Olssen on the same day to acknowledge his contribution to the City of Belfast.

The Committee noted the update on progress and granted approval for officers to progress a partnership approach and agreement with the Education Authority regarding a nonviolence programme.

Invite to Participate in a Visit to Srebrenica

The Committee consider the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of correspondence from the Chair of the Remembering Srebrenica UK formally inviting the Good Relations Manager to participate in a 4 day visit to Srebrenica along with other civil service and senior political representatives in September/October 2019. This follows on from visits by delegations from all parts of the UK and Ireland including at very senior level within other devolved regions.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- Consider the invite from the Chair of the Srebrenica Committee UK for the participation of the Good Relations Manager in a visit to Srebrenica in September/October 2019.

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1 The Srebrenica massacre, also known as the Srebrenica genocide was the July 1995 massacre of more than 8,000 Bosniaks, mainly men and boys and mostly Muslim, in and around the town of Srebrenica during the Bosnian War.**
- 3.2 In 2005, Kofi Annan, then Secretary-General of the United Nations described the massacre as the worst crime on European soil since the Second World War. Both the International Tribunal to the former state of Yugoslavia and the International Court of Justice have ruled the acts committed in July 1995 constituted genocide.**
- 3.3 Remembering Srebrenica and Council involvement**
- Remembering Srebrenica is a charitable initiative. It recognises that we have achieved a lot in terms of building a cohesive society here in the UK, but discrimination, promotion of hatred, extremism, and exclusion persist, and we must play our part, no matter how large or small, to create a better and safer society for all.**
- 3.4 It organises UK memorial events to honour survivors and keep alive the stories of their loved ones who died. They work with individuals and organisations to help strengthen society by learning the lessons of history to help tackle hatred, racism and intolerance wherever it occurs. They do this through commemoration, education and by taking individuals from communities across the UK to Srebrenica to speak to survivors and families whose loved ones were killed. Following the visit, participants are asked to apply the lessons learned from the experience and apply them in their own community and context to combat prejudice.**
- 3.5 Council have previously supported the Remembering Srebrenica event through provision of the City Hall as a venue which takes place in July and previous Lord Mayors have been invited to attend and deliver a speech.**

3.6 In commemorating this genocide in Europe in 1995, Remembering Srebrenica aims to:

- Raise awareness of the genocide and consequences for victims and their families;
- Highlight the impact of ethnic and religious intolerance;
- Confront the consequences of prejudice; and
- Encourage our community champions who have participated in similar visits to use their learning in their own communities and regions.

3.7 Request

Since 2013, Remembering Srebrenica has taken over 1,200 people to Srebrenica to learn about the consequences of hatred. Upon their return, delegates pledge to take action to raise awareness of the genocide and stand up to hatred and intolerance in their communities. In just six years, Remembering Srebrenica has brought people from different backgrounds together through organising 6,200 memorial activities across the UK and Ireland and educating 90,000 young people about Srebrenica and the dangers of hatred if left unchecked.

3.8 On this visit by a Northern Ireland delegation, there will be senior representatives from The Executive Office, the Department of Finance, two senior politicians and two special advisors. The chair of Remembering Srebrenica in Northern Ireland, will also participate.

3.9 During the visit, the conflict in the Balkans 1992-1995 will be explored including the siege of Sarajevo, the Dayton Agreement in 1995 and the delivery of power-sharing after that time; and of course, visit Srebrenica, to explore the build-up to the genocide in July 1995, what happened at Srebrenica and its aftermath; and indeed explore the diversity of Bosnia-Herzegovina prior to and since the conflict in the 1990s.

3.10 Relevance to Council

The outline of the visit has resonance for the work of Council given the challenging issues we are grappling with including confronting prejudice, division, how we embrace diversity and how we remember in a way that is ethical.

3.11 The Good Relations Unit is responsible for devising and implementing the Decade of Centenaries Programme remembering events from 100 years ago and also responsible for creating a narrative along with Party Group Leaders around how the Council could look at forthcoming 50th anniversaries in our

own conflict. In addition, the Council has devised a set of shared principles which has helped the Council to navigate its way through difficult and contentious issues during this time. Themes of commemoration and ethical remembering are also contained within the draft Good Relations Strategy as well as within the PEACE IV Programme and Good Relations Action Plan.

3.12 Therefore, it would seem fitting that we look to another recent conflict to study how they deal with the issue of remembrance and memorialisation and bring learning back as well as share our experience.

3.13 As Council has and probably will be the organisation which will take the lead in commemoration at a Belfast level, it would also be useful to liaise with the civil service around how they envisage dealing with this issue and look at potential areas of cooperation.

3.14 In addition, the TEO have asked us to partner with them again to deliver and host International Holocaust Remembrance Day again in January 2020 as next year is the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. It is worth noting that the IHR Day also remembers genocides in Darfur, Rwanda and Srebrenica.

3.15 Financial & Resource Implications

All costs for the trip will be covered by the organisation with no cost to Council. Resource would be Officer time and subsistence.

3.16 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The learning from the above visit would be incorporated into the Council's approach as to how we remember and would serve to have a positive impact on good relations and equality. There are no implications regarding rural need."

The Committee agreed to accept the invitation from the Chair of the Srebrenica Committee UK for the participation of the Good Relations Manager in a visit to Srebrenica in September/October 2019.

Language Strategy Action Plan 2018-20

The Committee noted the progress which had been made in the delivery of the Language Strategy Action Plan 2018-20 and the overview of planned activities.

Invitation to Join the International Shared Societies Project

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To advise members of a further request to participate in the international Shared Societies Project involving 5 other countries in Kosovo from 10-16th September 2019.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to consider and agree the following:

- **That Belfast City Council agrees to participate in the project in September 2019 to contribute to the discussion and explore how the project is developing.**
- **That a report on the project after the event would be brought back to the Council through the Shared City Partnership for further consideration**
- **Given the nature of the project, The Chair and Vice Chair of the Shared City Partnership or their nominees would be the most appropriate participants to attend.**
- **Given the challenging time commitment from 10-16th September 2019, if required Officers will investigate the options for timing, which will yield the most benefit to Council.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 The Council has received a request for up to 2 participants to be part of an international shared societies project.

3.2 This new five year project began last autumn, and an invitation was extended to Belfast City Council (BCC) to join as a partner organisation in August 2018. The decision was not to join at that time, but the organisers are hoping that fresh consideration can now be given to the idea.

3.3 The organisers would like to have Northern Ireland involved in the project: academics and people who have the practical task of implementing policies in a divided society. The academics who were first contacted were asked to suggest a practitioner organisation. They suggested the Council as an organisation with much to share from its experience in trying to create a shared city ethos, and the Council would still be the first choice.

3.4 The project which is a 5 year programme aims to bring together six countries to work collectively to create a deeper understanding of the idea of a shared society. It will bring together theorists from universities and practitioners who have to contend with real life cultural conflict on a day to day basis.

3.5 The opening residential seminar took place at the Arab-Jewish peace centre, Givat Haviva, in Israel in October 2018. The next residential event is planned to take place in Kosovo between September 10th and 16th this year

3.6 It has been designed as a shared learning experience and has secured funding for the first year from the German Peace Academy. Funding is being sought for the following years from EU Horizon 2020 project and other funding bodies. The countries involved are Belgium, Germany, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Israel/Palestine and Kosovo.

3.7 Participants from Northern Ireland

The academics who were contacted about the project thought that BCC as a practitioner organisation would have much to share from our experience of creating a shared city ethos. The academics who will be attending are

Gráinne Kelly, a Ulster University lecturer in Peace and Conflict Studies at INCORE, (International Conflict Research Institute).

Paul Nolan, an independent researcher who produced the first three Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Reports for the Community Relations Council.

Professor Mari Fitzduff is from Brandeis University, Boston. Mari is an international conflict resolution specialist who was previously the first director of the NI Community Relations Council, and the first director of INCORE.

3.5 Content

This is not a conference per se but rather participants will be expected to deliver presentations, talk knowledgeably about the Council's work in relation to a shared city, methodologies, current thinking and participate in discussions. Each country will describe its experiences, exploring both the achievements and the frustrations, and engage in discussions with the other partners. An annual report will be compiled distilling the learning from the sessions.

3.6 Context

The experience of the other 5 countries involved will assist with our own discussions around shared societies and contribute to the implementation of our good relations strategy. Members will note that the concept of shared space and services features heavily in the Good Relations Strategy through 2 of our outcomes

and this is an issue which remains highly challenging to the City. The impact on relationships, labour markets, the inefficient use of services and facilities, significant urban blight, poverty and educational disadvantage are all characteristics of divided areas.

- 3.7 We need to reconnect our city to ensure it continues to be recognised as a globally competitive, cohesive, welcoming, outward looking and forward-looking city with opportunities for all.
- 3.8 Belgium is a prosperous member of the European Union, but a country with three very distinct internal cultures: the Dutch-speaking region of in the north, the mostly French-speaking Wallonia region in the south, and the German-speaking cantons in the east. In 2010/11 Belgium did without a government for 589 days.

Germany, the heart of European social democracy, which is now struggling with issues arising from immigration. This is not just a recent phenomenon. In the 1960s and 1970s, the German governments invited 'guest workers' (Gastarbeiter) to migrate to Germany for work in the German industries. The largest immigrant group came from Turkey, and some generations on there are unresolved issues about the extent to which the host country and the immigrant communities experience a shared sense of citizenship.

Bosnia-Herzegovina The Bosnian war concluded in 1995 with the signing of the Dayton Accord, but since then the country has experienced an unhappy form of 'peace without reconciliation'. A complex constitutional architecture has led to the segregation of Bosniak, Serb and Croatian communities, but the Nansen Dialogue Project has created links extending across Croatia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia.

Israeli/Palestinians. The Middle Eastern partnership in this project is not between Israelis and the Palestinians in the West Bank or Gaza, but rather with the Palestinians who live within the state of Israel. The Givat Haviva Centre, which would be the official partner organisation, was created in order to build solidarity between Israeli peace activists and the Palestinian community in Israel. It is a recipient of the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education for its longstanding work in promoting Jewish-Arab dialogue and reconciliation.

In Kosovo, the issue of ethnicity and national identity and has been bubbling on the back burner ever since the new republic was created in 2008. There are those who want to re-draw the national boundaries to align them more closely with Serbian and Albanian

ethnic identities. Against this backdrop, there are those who want to build a shared society within the existing boundaries.

3.9 Decisions Required:

If Members are minded to agree to the Council's participation in the project, a decision could be taken to participate in the event in September to explore how the project is developing.

A report on the project after the event would be brought back to the Council through the Shared City Partnership for consideration.

Given the nature of the project, The Chair and Vice Chair of the Shared City Partnership or their nominees would be the most suitable members to attend.

In addition, it should be noted that 7 days is an exceptional time commitment and there is a possibility that nominated Members may wish to look at participating for a shorter period. The most appropriate option will be investigated.

3.10 Financial and Resource Implications

The cost to Council would involve the participants' daily expenses which can be met from existing budgets. The costs of travel and accommodation for the first seminar will be covered by the Peace Academy grant as outlined in the report.

3.11 Equality and Good Relations Implications/Rural needs Assessment.

The rationale for participating in the project is to look at how to create and sustain shared societies which will have a positive impact on equality and good relations."

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Garrett,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the Committee agrees not to participate in the International Shared Cities Project.

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

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

Further Proposal

Moved by Councillor Graham,
Seconded by Councillor Pankhurst,

That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendations in relation to the International Shared Cities Project and authorises the attendance of the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson of the Shared City Partnership at the residential seminar in Kosovo.

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

Operational Issues

Requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality

The Committee approved the recommendations made in respect of applications received up to 10 June 2019 as set out below:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2019 EVENTS						
Embassy of Sweden	6 June 2019	National Day Reception – A reception to mark the visit of the Swedish Embassy to Belfast to support and develop connections between Sweden and Northern Ireland. Organised in conjunction with the European Unit. Numbers attending – 50 - 100	B	No <i>£300 waived due to links to Council</i>	Yes, Wine Reception	<i>Approved by Delegated Authority</i> Approve No charge Wine Reception
Extern	12 June 2019	Launch of Personal Change Programme (PCP) – A launch event for the Personal Change Programme, a Shared Cities Partnership project which we are running in partnership with	B&D	No (Charity)	No hospitality	<i>Approved by Delegated Authority</i> Approve No charge No hospitality

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
		Belfast City Council. Numbers attending – 80				
St Rose's Dominican College	22 June 2019	St Rose's Dominican College Gala Dinner – A dinner to celebrate the lifetime of the school over the last 58 years before it merges with two neighbouring schools to become All Saints College. Numbers attending – 150 est	C	No	Yes, Wine Reception	<i>Approved by Delegated Authority</i> Approve No charge Wine Reception
British Council	25 July 2019	IAESTE Annual Summer Reception – a dinner to welcome international trainees involved in the IAESTE programme for paid industry placements across the STEM industry in NI. Numbers attending – 80 - 100	B&C	No – Charity	No hospitality	<i>Approved by Delegated Authority</i> Approve No charge No hospitality
Education Authority, Intercultural Education Service and The Executive Office, Urban Villages	16 September 2019	Schools of Sanctuary Celebration Awards – An awards ceremony for primary and post primary schools participating in the Schools of Sanctuary programme. Numbers attending – 200 est	C	Yes - £115	No hospitality	<i>Approved by Delegated Authority</i> Approve No charge No Reception

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	11 or 25 November 2019	Belfast Trust Chairman's Awards 2019 – Awards ceremony to recognise the contributions and achievements of the staff in the Belfast Trust. Numbers attending - 300	C	Yes - £825	No hospitality	<i>Approved by Delegated Authority</i> Approve Charge £825 No hospitality
Peace Players Northern Ireland	31 August 2019	PeacePlayers Champions 4 Peace Graduation Ceremony - to celebration the work of participants who have completed the Champions 4 Peace programme. Numbers attending – 100-135	C & D	No (Charity)	Yes, Soft Drinks Reception	Approve No charge Soft Drinks Reception
Organisation of Malayali's in NI (OMNI)	1 September 2019	Ponnonam 2019 – Cultural programme to celebrate Onam in the Indian community. Numbers attending - 500	C & D	No (Community)	No as annual event with cultural programme format	Approve No Charge No hospitality
Community Relations Council	17 September 2019	Together Building a United Community Engagement Forum - celebration event as part of Good Relations Week to acknowledge the results of community projects involved in the forum. Numbers attending – 150-200	B & C	Yes - £115	No hospitality	Approve Charge £115 No hospitality

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
Belfast Healthy Cities	7 October 2019	Launch of Care Zone – Launch of the CareZone project which aims to highlight key health inequalities in North Belfast and create an action plan to tackle these. Numbers attending – 50	B & D	No (Charity)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
Esc Films	25 October 2019	20th Anniversary Thank You Lunch – Informal lunch to celebrate achievements of esc films over 20 years working with vulnerable people in Belfast. Numbers attending – 60	C	No (Charity)	Yes, Wine Reception	Approve No charge Wine Reception
Queen's University Belfast	28 October 2019	European Conference in Molecular Pharmacology Welcome Reception – Welcome reception as part of 3 day conference taking place at Queen's University Belfast. Numbers attending – 150	A & B	No <i>£300 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	Yes, Wine Reception <i>(linked to Visit Belfast)</i>	Approve No Charge Wine Reception
Family Care Adoption Services	1 November 2019	Family Care Adoption Services 50th Anniversary Reception – Reception to celebrate 50 th anniversary of Family Care to acknowledge the achievements of	C & D	No (Charity)	Yes, Wine Reception	Approve No Charge Wine Reception

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
		adoptive families and their young people. Numbers attending – 50-80				
United States Consulate General Belfast	3 November 2019	Welcome Reception for the US Department of State Management Officer's Workshop – Welcome reception as part of 6 day conference taking place in Belfast. Numbers attending – 150	A & B	No <i>£300 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	Yes, Wine Reception <i>(linked to Visit Belfast)</i>	Approve No Charge Wine Reception
Association for Simulated Practice in Healthcare (ASPiH)	5 November 2019	ASPiH 10th Anniversary Conference Dinner – Conference dinner as part of 4 day conference taking place in Belfast. Numbers attending – 250 - 300	A & B	No <i>£825 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	Yes, Wine Reception <i>(linked to Visit Belfast)</i>	Approve No Charge Wine Reception
Onus (NI) Ltd	19 November 2019	Onus 10th Annual Awards Ceremony of the Workplace Charter on Domestic Violence – Awards Ceremony to recognize the achievement of participating Workplace Charter organisations. Numbers attending – 120	B, C & D	No (Community)	Yes, Tea, Coffee & Biscuits	Approve No charge Tea and Coffee Reception
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	7 December 2019	10 Year Celebration of the Regional	C	Yes - £825	No hospitality	Approve Charge £825 No hospitality

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
		<p>Primary Percutaneous Coronary Intervention Service – Dinner to celebrate 10 years of the service being provided in Cardiology units across Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Numbers attending – 200-300</p>				
2020 EVENTS						
HelmsBriscoe	9 March 2020	<p>EMEA Regional Meeting Welcome Reception – Welcome reception and networking event as part of a 3 day conference taking place in Belfast.</p> <p>Numbers attending –250</p>	A & B	No <i>£300 waived due to links with Visit Belfast</i>	Yes, Wine Reception <i>(linked to Visit Belfast)</i>	Approve No charge Wine Reception
CO3, Chief Officers 3 rd Sector	12 March 2020	<p>The Leadership and Good Governance Awards – Awards ceremony to celebrate the achievements of leaders in the charity sector in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Numbers attending – 80</p>	C & D	No (Charity)	Yes, Tea, Coffee & Biscuits	Approve No charge Tea and Coffee Reception
44 th Scout Group Belfast	11 September 2020	<p>100th Anniversary Dinner – Dinner to celebrate the past 100 years of the 44th Scout Group in Belfast.</p> <p>Numbers attending – 70 - 90</p>	C & D	No (Charity)	Yes, Wine Reception	Approve No Charge Wine Reception

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	26 November 2020	Belfast Trust Chairman's Awards 2020 – Annual awards ceremony to recognize the achievements of Belfast Trust staff. Numbers attending – 300	C	Yes - £825	No hospitality	Approve Charge £825 No hospitality
2021 EVENTS						
European Council on Eating Disorders	23 September 2021	European Council on Eating Disorders General Meeting Welcome Reception– Welcome reception for international delegates as part of a 3 day conference taking place in Belfast. Numbers attending – 250-300	A & B	No <i>(£300 waived as linked to Visit Belfast)</i>	Yes, Wine Reception <i>(linked to Visit Belfast)</i>	Approve No charge Wine Reception

Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of Budget and Transformation Panel of 13th June, 2019.

Use of the City Hall – Destination Tourism

The City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services informed the Members that the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) had been working in conjunction with a number of companies to promote Belfast as a showcase destination for tourists, with a particular focus on tour operators and business incentive market (in which companies offer travel products as bonuses/incentives). That entailed bringing a range of venues and attractions together and marketing them in a unique package.

As an example, last year the City Hall was used to host the Hosts Global Conference which had generated £4 million for the local economy to date. That type of market was very competitive and lucrative and the unique selling proposition (USP) of a city was key to successful marketing and securing business. The City Hall was regarded as a signature

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

feature of the City and a major incentive in attracting business. Giving access to the City Hall for events was a major selling point that many other cities could not offer. The NITB regarded this type of business as of equal importance to conferencing in terms of bed nights and visitor spend in the City. It was further of the view that there was a serious risk that this business would be lost if the City Hall could not be made part of the offer. Under the current arrangements the City Hall was permitted to be used for hosting events related to conferences but not the destination tourism type events described.

Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee agrees to amend the terms and conditions regarding use of City Hall to permit the hosting of events to promote destination tourism.

The Committee adopted the recommendation and granted delegated authority to the City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services to approve the hosting of events as described and to also delegate to the Director the negotiation and charging of fees for such events.

Issues raised in advance by Members

**Northern Ireland Local Government Officers
Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC): Divestment**

In accordance with notice on agenda, Councillor Long addressed the issue of divestment by NILGOSC and proposed the following:

“This Council calls on the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) to divest the Local Government pension scheme from any fossil fuel companies within 5 years.”

The proposal was seconded by Councillor McDonough-Browne.

At the request of a Member, the proposer agreed to amend his motion with the replacement of the words “within 5 years” with “as soon as possible” and to the addition of “and agrees to write to the other NI Councils seeking support for this motion”. However, he refused a further request to include “tobacco and arms companies” in the proposal.

Accordingly, it was

Moved by Councillor Garret and
Seconded by Councillor Murphy,

That the proposal standing in the name of Councillor Long and seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown be amended to read as follows:

“This Council calls on the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) to divest the Local Government pension scheme from any fossil fuel, tobacco and arms companies as soon as possible and agrees to write to the other NI Councils seeking support for this motion”.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 21st June, 2019**

On a vote by show of hands, nine Members voted for the amendment and seven against and it was declared carried.

The amendment was put as the substantive motion, when nine Members voted for and seven against and declared carried.

Closure of Avoniel Leisure Centre and Templemore

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Kyle addressed the Committee in relation to concerns around future leisure provision in East Belfast, mainly with regard to the closure of the Avoniel Leisure Centre and Templemore.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that officers host further meetings with users of the Avoniel Leisure Centre in order to discuss mobilisation and community concerns.

**Report – A Prison Without Walls –
Asylum, Migration and Human Rights**

Councillor M. Kelly, in accordance with the notice previously given, referred to a report which had been published earlier that week entitled “*A Prison Without Walls – Asylum, Migration and Human Rights*”. She explained that a number of the recommendations contained in the report were relevant to and/or impacted on the Council and requested if a report on these issues could be submitted to the August meeting of the Committee.

The Committee agreed to this course of action.

Chairperson

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 4th June, 2019

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Collins (Chairperson);
The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McReynolds;
Alderman McCoubrey; and
Councillors Baker, Black, Bunting, Cobain,
Corr, Donnelly, Kelly, Kyle, Magee,
McCusker, Mulholland, Newton,
Smyth and Verner.

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

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors de Faoite, McLaughlin and McMullan.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd April were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Black declared an interest in respect of agenda item 2 (c), Community Development Grants Update, in that she was employed by the Grosvenor Community Centre, which received a community developments grant, and she removed herself from the room while the item was under consideration.

Councillor Verner declared an interest in respect of agenda item 7 (j), Ur City 2, in that she was employed by the Greater Shankill Partnership which had an application in, and she removed herself from the room while the matter was under consideration.

Councillor Bunting declared an interest in respect of agenda item 6 (a), Parks Events Small Grants Scheme, in that she was secretary of the Belvoir Area Residents Group which had applied for funding. Similarly, Councillors Kyle and Newton declared an interest in the same item as they were members of the Lagan Village Youth and Community Association which had also applied for funding. However, as the report was only for noting, they remained in the room during the discussion.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

Committee Schedule

The Committee:

1. agreed that all future meetings would commence at 5.15pm;
2. noted that three additional Special meetings would be held throughout the year focusing on local housing issues and engagement with the Belfast Youth Forum; and
3. agreed that it would meet on the following dates in 2019:
 - Tuesday, 6th August;
 - Tuesday, 10th September;
 - *Special Meeting on Monday, 16th September (to include the Housing Investment Plan and the Belfast Youth Forum);*
 - Tuesday, 8th October;
 - Tuesday, 5th November; and
 - Tuesday, 3rd December.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following three 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 on the following three items 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.

**Request for use of Botanic Gardens and Boucher Road –
June 2020 to 2023**

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for the use of the Boucher Road Playing Fields and the Great Lawn at Botanic Gardens for a number of music events between 2020 and 2023.

During discussion, a number of Members requested that the organisers of the events would engage with local residents. A Member stated that it was important that Neighbourhood officers were not relocated from other areas to assist with large concerts. A further Member suggested that officers should ensure that the Council would be able to revoke use of the venues if necessary.

A Member suggested that it would be helpful for the Committee to receive a report after the events had been held in June by Aiken Promotions, in order that it could make an informed decision regarding the hire of the Great Lawn in Botanic Gardens for future years.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

1. to defer consideration of the hire of the Great Lawn at Botanic Gardens for a series of music events in the years 2020, 2021 and 2022 until August;
2. to grant authority to Aiken Promotions the use and hire of the facilities at Boucher Road Playing Fields for a series of music events, with attendances up to 45,000 persons, during the months of May and June in the years 2021, 2022 and 2023, to include set up and take down; and
3. to grant authority to the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services, subject to satisfactory terms being agreed and on condition that:
 - the promoter would resolve all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
 - an appropriate legal agreement being completed, to be prepared by the City Solicitor;
 - the promoter would meet all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service, including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence; and
 - to negotiate an appropriate fee for use of the both facilities taking into account costs to the Council, minimising negative impact on the immediate area but also the potential wider benefit to the city economy.

Outstanding Debts

(Ms. J. Wilson, Business Manager, City and Neighbourhoods Department attended in connection with this item)

The Committee was advised that authorisation was being sought for an outstanding account to be written off. The Business Manager provided the Committee with the history and the actions which had been taken to date in relation to recouping the debt.

After discussion the Committee agreed that an outstanding account of £5,656.25 be written off, in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation 2.2.7.

Community Development Grants Programme 2019/20
- Second Stage Payments

(Councillor Black declared an interest in respect of this item and left the room while it was under consideration.)

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

The Strategic Director provided the Committee with an update on the Community Development Grants Programme (CDGP) for 2019/2020. He explained that he was seeking approval to extend the current contracts to 31st March, 2020.

He outlined to the Members that an open call for applications would be operated for Capacity Building Grants, Revenue for Community Building Grants and Advice Funding for the year 2020/21.

In response to a Member's request, the Strategic Director agreed that the details of consortia would be outlined in future reports.

A number of Members expressed concerns regarding the shortfall in funding for the Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service. The Strategic Director advised the Members that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee would be considering the end of year funding at its next meeting and that it would be best placed to investigate whether any additional funding could be allocated towards that Service.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. agreed that the Chairperson of the Committee would engage with the Chairperson of the Strategic Policy and Resources (SP&R) Committee to convey the Committee's concerns regarding the shortfall in funding for the Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service, particularly in relation to the SP&R Committee's upcoming report on end of year funding;
2. agreed the extension of current funding contracts for Capacity Building Grants, Revenue for Community Buildings Grants and Advice Funding to 31 March 2020; and
3. noted the open call for applications for Capacity Building Grants, Revenue for Community Building Grants and Advice funding for 2020/21.

Matters Referred Back from Council/Motions

**Response from Department of Health
re: Suicide Prevention Motion**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st April, had passed a motion in relation to the increasing number of suicides across the City and called on the Northern Ireland Assembly to implement the Protect Life 2 Strategy on suicide prevention.

The Members were advised that a detailed response to the Council's letter had been received from Mr R. Pengelly, the Permanent Secretary and Health and Social Care Chief Executive.

In his letter, the Permanent Secretary had explained that he welcomed the Council's recognition of the devastating impact of suicide and its willingness to work with others to reduce rates across the City. He outlined that, regionally, £8.7million was invested each year in suicide prevention. He also stated that the Public Health Agency

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

supported a range of projects aimed at improving mental health and wellbeing through a small grants scheme, where £63,000 had been awarded to 18 projects across the Belfast area last year.

He outlined that, in the absence of the Northern Ireland Assembly, and of a Health Minister, the Department was continuing to review all health and social care policies on a case by case basis and was taking decisions, with legal advice, when it was in the public interest. He advised that the Department was currently seeking agreement from other stakeholders on their actions contained within the draft Protect Life 2 strategy prior to his consideration for publication. He emphasised that, despite the delay in publication of the new strategy, suicide prevention services continued to be supported and developed and a number of new initiatives from the draft strategy were being piloted using transformation monies.

The Committee noted the response.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Committee Plan Priorities Overview

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 This paper presents a list of emerging priorities for note by the new committee. These are based on the Belfast Agenda commitment, the emerging corporate plan and ongoing work programmes within the Department.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note;

- the emerging priorities at this stage for the City and Neighbourhoods Department.
- That the Strategic Policy & Resources committee on the 21st June will discuss a Draft Corporate plan that will set the organisational direction which will then inform this committee's planning over the coming months.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

Background and context

3.1 In preparation for the new Council term the Chief Officers have reviewed and revised the Corporate business planning approach and have been developing a draft Corporate plan to

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

assist member discussion and it is anticipated that this will be presented to SP&R in June.

3.2 It is expected this will facilitate discussion at the various committees and help to finalise the specific committee plans. The anticipated timeframe is:

- **Committee priorities overview to shape the new committees discussions (June)**
- **Committee plan for People and Communities should be developed by September.**

3.3 New Members of Council will also receive more information on this Department and its wide range of functions etc as part of the planned induction (10/ 11 June). Members should note that there is a significant body of service delivery on a daily basis which forms the business as usual for this department, although this is not reflected in the table below these are also subject to review and improvement.

3.4 The table below outlines the emerging Committee priorities overview for which this committee has oversight for or has influence over, as part of the Belfast Agenda. This has been cross-referenced with existing programmes and key projects and cross cutting themes such as the Belfast Region City Deal.

<i>Priorities</i>	<i>Key deliverables</i>	<i>Over the year we will:</i>
Neighbourhood Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Design a new model of neighbourhood working, with teams which are better integrated, flexible and responsive. · Review the Council 'community Provision' offer · Implement our Open Space & Street Scene project (integrating street cleansing & parks operations) · Develop 5 transformational, place based regeneration programmes in local areas across N,S,E & W Belfast. 	
Good Relations Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Launch the Public Strategy, complete a Good Relations audit; promote key messages e.g. <p>Good Relations is everyone's business & complete an Implementation Plan aligned to</p> <p>Belfast Agenda, Local Development Plan & Resilience Strategy.</p>	
Leisure Transformation Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Open the new £25 million Andersonstown Leisure Centre; £20 million Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre & £15 million Brook Leisure Centre. Develop their mobilisation plans with GLL and create 75 new employment 	

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

	<p>opportunities in these centres.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Commence construction of the new £8 million Avoniel Leisure Centre and £17m restoration of Templemore Baths (includes £5m HLF funding). · Progress plans for a new facility at Girdwood · Develop our Sports Development Framework, in collaboration with our Leisure Partners (GLL), to enhance the delivery of sport and leisure opportunities & outcomes and create pathways to improved health & wellbeing.
Physical Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Continue to use our £28.2m Belfast Investment Fund, £9m Local Investment Fund & £4million Social Outcomes Fund to support partnership projects citywide; · Deliver 30+ projects for the Executive Office (Social Investment Fund & the Urban Villages initiatives) & a number of projects for the Department for Communities; · Work with Members to develop a new Physical Programme; and · Examine the funding mechanisms to support the Council's future Physical Programme including the potential for a new neighbourhood fund.
Sustainability/ Climate Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Scope our carbon and sustainable energy strategy and identify priority areas for research/study (in order to enable reporting on GHG emissions); · Contribute to ESRC Climate Commission and jointly Commission 'mini Stern review'; · Commission scenario planning on sea level rises using QUB and Met Office Data; · Support delivery recommendations in Belfast Infrastructure Study particularly relating to the transport/ energy / renewable energy nexus; · Review our Sustainable Procurement Strategy; · Develop approach to electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Belfast.
Waste & Resourceful Belfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Propose new waste collection arrangements under the 10 Year Waste Framework Strategy; · Test new collection arrangements for around 5,500 households (September 2019); · Undertake Phase 2 of the "No Food Waste" campaign; · Complete route optimization exercises for domestic and commercial waste; · Prepare a Fleet Strategy for the Council's vehicles; · Through the Resourceful Belfast programme maximise economic potential through the

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · creation of social enterprises; · Develop a waste acceptance policy at the Council's Household Recycling Centres & CA sites; · Undertake a feasibility study for development of the Duncrue Complex for fit-for-purpose waste facilities.
City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Ensure the city centre is green, attractive & safe by initiating the Streetscape city centre improvement project aiming to achieve the citycentre achieving Purple Flag status to demonstrate this.
Customer Focus Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Awarding of contract for the strategic delivery partner; design of the new customer hub; <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Procurement of Web CMS for new website & also the new CRM system.</p>

3.6 Financial & Resource Implications

Full resource scoping will be part of the process for preparing the final Committee Plan.

3.7 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

Equality and good relations/rural needs considerations will be factored in to each stage of the corporate business planning process.”

During discussion, the Strategic Director advised the Committee that officers were keen to get Members' feedback and input into the Committee Plan and that he hoped to submit a further report to the September meeting.

The Committee adopted the recommendations within the report.

Future Burial Provision and Engagement with Neighbouring Councils

The Director of City Services reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 2nd April, it had agreed that an Expression of Interest (EOI) would be undertaken to identify potential burial land which would serve the north and west of the City. She explained that officers were currently working on drafting the necessary paperwork for the EOI to be issued.

She explained further that, at that meeting, the Committee had been provided with information which had been commissioned in order to assist the Council in determining the amount of burial land which remained and its future requirements. The Members

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

were advised that, given good practice guidelines, the Council would be seeking between 5.51 and 8.66 hectares of new land.

The Committee was advised of a recent request which had been received from Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC), requesting a sub-regional approach towards searching for burial space and crematorium provision, given the complexity of finding and resourcing such key projects.

The Director explained that an initial discussion had been hosted between senior officers of Belfast City Council, LCCC and representatives of Ards and North Down and Antrim and Newtownabbey Councils in May 2019.

After discussion, the Committee noted:

1. that preparation was underway for an Expression of Interest (EOI) to be issued for new burial land, as agreed by the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group at its meeting in December 2018, and ratified by the People and Communities Committee in April 2019; and
2. the requests in respect of consultation and engagement by LCCC with neighbouring Councils and approved formal engagement with adjacent councils to consider and progress discussions, if appropriate, a sub-regional options proposal on burial space and crematorium provision.

Physical Programme/Asset Management

Tullycarnet Park, Pavilion and Bowling Green

The Committee was advised that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, as its meeting on 18th August, 2017, had approved funding through the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF) to Tullycarnet Action Group Initiative Trust (TAGIT) Boxing Club for the construction of a new boxing club facility.

The Members were advised that the Council was proposing to lease 0.093 acres of open space land in Tullycarnet Park to TAGIT to facilitate the development of a new boxing club facility, which would significantly enhance the sporting potential of the park and produce a community benefit.

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it grants a Land Lease to TAGIT Boxing Club for the purposes of constructing a new boxing club facility on the Council lands.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

**Park Events Small Grants Scheme
Tranche 1 Awards**

(Councillors Bunting, Kyle and Newton declared an interest in respect of this item, in that they were members of groups which had applied for funding. However, as a

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

decision was not required from the Committee, they remained in the room for the duration of the item)

The Strategic Director provided the Committee with a list of the successful and unsuccessful applicants which had applied for funding through Tranche 1 of the Parks Events Small Grants Scheme.

He explained that the Open Spaces and Active Living Unit had assessed the applications against specific criteria, with 35 out of 49 applications having been successful. The Committee was advised that 20% of the applications had been reviewed by an Independent Assessment Panel.

The Committee noted the update which had been provided.

Review of Partnership Funding

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Elected Members on funding provided from within departmental revenue estimates to partner organisations to support their work in the 19/20 financial year.

1.2 Council has partnership working arrangements with a range of organisations which share common objectives. In previous years, those requests for funding have been approved by People and Communities Committee on a case by case basis. However, given the changing context and ongoing financial pressures these requests are being presented collectively for consideration.

1.3 Committee may wish to note that at its meeting in March 2019, Members agreed to continue with a partner financial contribution to Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful for the ‘Live Here, Love Here’ Campaign and ‘Eco Schools’ Project to the value of £55,000 but on the condition a value for money/outcomes review was undertaken.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 To seek authority from Committee;

- **to commence a review of the ongoing financial contributions to each of these partner organisations focussed on alignment with the Belfast Agenda outcomes and value for money.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland (ORNI)

The Council wishes to promote the use of Mountain Bike Trails and Jump Parks at Barnett Demesne and Mary Peters Track to ensure the facility is well used, contributing health and well-being by encouraging active lifestyles. This is a well-used facility with over 45,000 uses per year on the Barnett's Mountain Bike Trails and Dirt Jumps.

3.2 The marketing campaigns and website management by ORNI create and manage advertising in Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland to ensure tourists are aware of the trails available at Barnett's Demesne and Mary Peters Track as well as providing valuable updates on trail closures, conditions and events.

3.3 The funding provided by Belfast City Council is £5,000 towards the cost of promotion, support and liaison with consortium partners to ensure a collaborative approach providing mutual benefits for the mountain bike trail centres in Northern Ireland. Provision has been made in the departmental revenue budgets for this contribution since 2013/2014.

3.4 The funding provided is based on full support from each stakeholder with match funding being provided by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and Mid Ulster District Council for Trail Centres in their areas.

3.5 Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC)

Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC) was established in 1988 and is part of the World Health Organisation Healthy Cities Network. Its aim is to work with statutory, community and voluntary partners to make Belfast a more healthy, equitable and sustainable city. Its involvement in the WHO Healthy Cities Network enables Belfast to connect and learn about health and wellbeing policy and practice from across the world. Preparation is currently underway to make an application for Phase VII of World Healthy Cities and Officers are working with Belfast Healthy Cities to ensure full alignment with the Belfast Agenda.

3.6 Council has been supporting Belfast Healthy Cities annually since its inception with the most recent award being £81,294 provided for within the annual revenue estimates. Belfast

Healthy Cities is funded by other statutory organisations, including the Public Health Agency and Belfast Trust.

3.7 Lagan Valley Regional Park (LVRP)

The Lagan Valley Regional Park (LVRP) is a partnership between Belfast City Council, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, the Department of Communities and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). Belfast City Council has funded LVRP since its inception in 1967 and, along with Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, are its main funders.

3.8 People & Communities Committee at its meeting on 12 May 2015, approved funding of £41,055 for 2015/16 and provision has been made in revenue budgets at this level since then. The NIEA provides funding to LVRP but at a reduced level and there remains uncertainty around central government funding. Following representation to Belfast City Council, a one off non-recurring additional award of £25,000 was made to LVRP for the 19/20 financial year, bringing the total award for 19/20 to £66,055.

3.9 Belfast Hills Partnership (BHP)

The Belfast Hills Partnership (BHP) brings together a divergent range of partners from local government, environmental groups, quarry and farming representatives and local communities with the joint aim of protecting this valuable resource on the perimeter of North and West Belfast. The Council has supported BHP since its inception in 2003/4 and the Parks & Leisure Committee at its meeting on 14 April 2011, approved its annual funding of £36,900. Provision has been made in revenue budgets at this level since then.

3.10 This partnership has in turn generated much needed investment in the landscape and infrastructure within our parks. This ranged from the construction of new paths in Ligoniel and Cave Hill Country Park and an orienteering course in Belfast Castle Estate to heritage interpretation, visitor counters, habitat mapping and numerous events.

3.11 Changing Context

Given the changing context with the development of the Belfast Agenda and associated community planning implementation mechanisms as well as continued pressure on Council finances, it is recommended that Council uses the 19/20 financial year to undertake a review of its ongoing partnership arrangements with a focus on alignment with the Belfast Agenda and value for money.

3.12 The review will be commissioned externally and is focussed only on Council's contribution to the identified organisations. Recommendations from the review are expected in autumn 2019 at which time further Committee consideration may be required.

3.13 Financial & Resource Implications

All of the above has been budgeted for within existing departmental revenue estimates for 19/20.

3.14 Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessments

There are no known equality, rural needs issues, however this will be reviewed on an ongoing basis."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Operational Issues

Street Naming

The Committee considered a report in relation to the naming of new streets and a continuation of an existing street in the City.

The Committee approved the naming in respect of:

- Castlegowan Drive, off Catlegowan Place, BT5,
- (Continuation) Castegowan Park, off Quarry Hill, BT5,
- Whitewell Grove, off Whitewell Road, BT36; and
- Elmgrove Court, off Beersbridge Road, BT5.

Dual Language

The Members were advised that the Council's policy on the erection of a second street nameplate required that at least 66.6% of the people surveyed in the street must be in favour of the proposal.

The Committee was informed that at least two thirds of the total numbers of persons surveyed in the streets were in favour of the proposal to erect second street nameplates in Irish.

The Committee approved applications to erect second nameplates in Irish at Edenmore Drive, Bingnian Drive and Corby Way.

Affordable Warmth Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 Belfast City Council has been engaged in a partnership with the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) in the delivery of the Affordable Warmth Scheme (AWS) since 2014.

1.2 The scheme aims to address fuel poverty for the most vulnerable households in the city by targeting those households that meet certain criteria, as identified by Ulster University. While it is a targeted scheme, self-referrals are also considered. To qualify for the scheme occupant’s income must be below £20,000 (gross).

1.3 The eligibility criteria for the boiler replacement element of the scheme includes:

- have an existing central heating boiler that is at least 15 years old; and
- be aged over 65; or
- receive Child Benefit for a child under 16 years of age; or
- receive DLA.

This report provides an update on the scheme including confirmation received from the DfC of the funding allocation for 2019-2020 and the level of referrals to be provided.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to;

- note the contents of the report and consider the chair of committee writing to the Permanent Secretary for DfC raising the inadequacy of the level of funding related to the levels of need being identified through the scheme.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

During 2018-2019:

- the Service completed 303 referrals to the NIHE.

- the total value of approvals granted for the scheme in Belfast was £871,381
 - 450 measures were installed
 - 233 homes were improved within Belfast.
- 3.2 The scheme continues to receive a high volume of enquiries. While the scheme is primarily targeted, the service received significant number of self-referrals, with 686 households currently on the self-referral holding list.
- 3.3 Correspondence issued from DfC to Councils on 4th April 2019 , contained in Appendix 1, states that the number of referrals which will be accepted by the NIHE has reduced from 30 per month (18-19) to 18 per month (19-20) for each council area – 216 in total.
- 3.4 The funding provided to each council to deliver their part of the scheme has also been reduced from £68,780 in 2018–2019 to £41,256 for 2019-2020. The reduction is due to the overall scheme reduction and the increase in average spend for measures per household, which has risen to £4,500, from the original estimated £1,400.
- 3.5 The overall funding is split equally between the 11 council areas, and no consideration is taken on the variations in number of households waiting to be considered, or the nature of the measures involved.
- 3.6 The funding being provided is insufficient to fully cover the current salary costs and has led to one member of staff being released. The service currently has only the co-ordinator in post who is carrying out the full range of duties to manage the scheme and provide the referrals through to the NIHE. The Building Control Service also continues to subsidise the administration of the AWS as it handles the significant number of calls about the scheme. This remains in the region of £40,000 per year.
- 3.7 The team continue to triage the cases, in line with a process agreed with DfC, to ensure that the most vulnerable are helped. The triage should ensure that referrals are made for those most vulnerable, with broken boilers or the elderly but significant numbers of eligible households will not avail of the scheme at this time
- 3.8 The Building Control Service has been informed by NIHE that the DfC have delayed the issuing of approvals for applications for the Affordable Warmth Scheme. This temporary delay impacts all Councils across Northern Ireland and will affect approximately 900 applications received by the Housing

Executive since 31/12/18 and 400 applications received prior to 31/12/18.

- 3.9 DfC have confirmed that they are seeking a more long term approach to the scheme, over a five year period, with a business case prepared for the consideration of any future minister. It has also commissioned a report from the Department of Finance on the future of the scheme and the final official findings are yet to be released.

3.10 Financial & Resource Implications

The DfC will provide £41,256 in funding for 2019-2020 which is insufficient to cover current salary costs. This is leading to the loss of an experienced site officer who is being redeployed to another part of the council.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no equality, good relations or rural needs issues.”

A Member suggested that the Department should be paying for the installation of solar panels, in terms of a long-term, environmentally sustainable way of heating homes.

A number of Members expressed serious concerns regarding the level of funding for the scheme across the City.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that a letter be forwarded on behalf of the Committee to the Permanent Secretary for the Department for Communities raising the following points:

- the inadequacy of the level of funding related to the levels of need being identified through the scheme;
- the amount spent on bureaucracy administering the scheme;
- that Belfast, as the capital city, had by far the largest population and that the allocation of funding should be based on need rather than split equally between the 11 Councils;
- that the scheme should have a key focus on ensuring that houses were well insulated; and
- that the Permanent Secretary be invited to a meeting to discuss the Affordable Warmth Programme.

Food Service Delivery Plan

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The Food Safety Unit works with local businesses to build compliance with Food Law and to ensure that food produced and

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

sold in Belfast is safe and can be trusted. This not only protects the consumer it also protects and enhances the reputation of the City, our local businesses and their competitiveness.

- 1.2 Food related illness costs the local economy, individual businesses and the consumer. It is estimated (based on N.I. Department of Health statistics) that in Belfast around 11,200 people may suffer from food poisoning and food related illness annually, potentially resulting in 104 hospital admissions, 5 deaths and costing the Belfast economy in the region of £19 million.
- 1.3 A reputation for good food hygiene standards can support economic growth. The Food Hygiene Rating Act (NI) 2016 requires businesses to display their food hygiene rating, improving the opportunities for consumers to make informed choices and encouraging improved compliance. It is expected that this enhances the reputation of Belfast as a safe place to visit with 99% of food businesses rated as 3, 4 or 5 (broadly compliant or better). (See appendix 2 for ratings breakdown).
- 1.4 BREXIT will continue to pose a major challenge for the service this year with the potential for additional checks on the import and export of foods. We are working closely with the Food Standards Agency, DAERA, government departments, local businesses and other stakeholders to plan for reasonable worst case scenario's and ensure adequate arrangements are in place to facilitate trade and protect consumers.
- 1.5 It is estimated that around 2 million people living in the UK have a food allergy and officers work to ensure food businesses provide the required (allergen) information to enable consumers to make informed choices. However recent cases of severe allergic reactions, including the tragic death of Natasha Ednan-Laperouse after eating a Pret a Manger sandwich, have highlighted concerns regarding the adequacy of labelling requirements for food that is prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) i.e. food that has been packed on the same premises from which it is being sold. The Food Standards Agency have just completed a public consultation on options to address these concerns. Additional legal requirements will require officer time to support, monitor and ensure compliance. It is likely this work will impact significantly on the unit.
- 1.6 Each year, the Council produces a Food Service Delivery Plan which sets out the activities, techniques and approaches to be taken during the year to support businesses in ensuring food safety, food standards and to promote informed healthy choices. The Plan provides the basis on which the Council's regulatory activities are monitored and audited by the Food Standards Agency and it is a requirement that it is presented to the Council for approval.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to approve;

- The Food Service Delivery Plan 2019-2020.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has a key role in overseeing local authority regulatory activities to ensure that official controls are delivered. Powers to enable the FSA to monitor and audit local authorities are contained in the Food Standards Act 1999. A detailed Framework Agreement on local food law enforcement has been produced by the Agency, in conjunction with local authority representative bodies, to provide guidance on how regulatory service plans should be structured and what they should contain. Service plans developed under these arrangements provide the basis on which local authorities are monitored and audited by the Food Standards Agency.

3.2 The Framework Agreement as described above requires that Food Service Delivery Plans should be submitted to the relevant Member forum, in this case the People and Communities Committee, for approval. This is to ensure local transparency and accountability.

3.3 A summary of the key work activities completed in the last year and profiling the work of the unit is included for information in Appendix 1. A summary of current food hygiene ratings is included in Appendix 2. The Food Service Delivery Plan for 2019-2020 is included in Appendix 3.

3.4 Financial & Resource Implications

The resources required for this core service have been included in the City and Neighbourhood Services Revenue Estimates for the year and no additional resources are anticipated.

3.5 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

The Planting of One Million Trees over a 15 Year Period/ Council’s Tree Policy

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 Members are advised of a ‘Notice of Motion’ from the Council meeting of the 4th March 2019 in regards to the ‘Planting of one million trees initiative’ and the agreement that this be referred to the People & Communities Committee for consideration. In addition Members are also advised of a request from Emma Little Pengelly MP, tabled at the February meeting of the People & Communities Committee to plant 5 small trees on Council land as part of the Queens Commonwealth Tree Canopy Project in March 2019. The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the matter to enable a report to be submitted to a future meeting which would detail any policy for such requests. The purpose of this report is to consider the detail in relation to these requests.

1.2 Recommendations

I. The Planting of One Million Trees over a 15 year period

The Committee is asked to agree in principle that it becomes the lead partnership facilitator for this Project, with a goal to planting one million trees in the city over the next 15 years. The principle commitment is subject to further officer level discussions with Belfast Metropolitan Residents Group (BMRG) to clarify the level of officer resource required to support any facilitation role between the BMRG and the fore mentioned interested organisations. There is no Council financial contribution.

II. Council’s Tree Policy & Request from Emma Little Pengelly, MP.

The Committee is asked to approve the proposed policy position for future tree planting requests within our Parks and Open Spaces which mark significant occasions and events:

'Permission for future tree planting requests may be granted by the People and Communities Committee on a request by request basis. Any tree planting proposals/request received by the Council should fit in and be aligned with the Council's 'Tree Management Plan' for that individual Park/Open Space as advised by Council Officers within City and Neighbourhood Services'

Based on the noted policy statement above, committee is asked to accede to the request submitted by Emma Little Pengelly MP, to plant 5 small trees to mark Her Majesty the Queens' Commonwealth Tree Canopy Project.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

(i) The Planting of One Million Trees over a 15 year period

At the Council meeting on 4th March 2019 it was agreed under a 'Notice of Motion' that a request for the planting of one million trees over a 15 year period be referred to the People and Communities Committee and a report be submitted to a future Council meeting which would investigate ways in which the Council could help facilitate the planting of one million trees in Belfast over the next 15 years.

3.2 Officers from the City and Neighbourhood Services Department met with Peter Carr and Peter Diehl, two representatives from the BMRG on 11th April 2019. The group gave an overview of their proposal which is ultimately to see the planting of one million trees over the next 15 years. The BMRG indicated who they had been in communication with to date, with regards to supporting their initiative with possible financial/ material assistance and potential suitable areas of land for planting.

- Harbour Commission
- Department for Infrastructure
- Housing Executive
- Queens University
- Translink
- Urban Villages
- Woodland Trust

3.3 The BMRG would want to explore a number possible funding avenues to support this Initiative.

3.4 The BMGR made reference to the Council's draft Local Development Plan (LDP) which recommends the inclusion of

trees in new developments and to seek to develop the City's green and blue infrastructure network. The group stated that while these objectives are positive, more is needed by way of further extensive tree planting.

3.5 The BMRG would like to see the Council take ownership of the 'one million tree' project and act as the main facilitator, working in partnership with the city's people, landowners and service providers

3.6 The Council currently invests an annual sum of £20,000 towards replacement and new tree planting within its Parks and Open Spaces which continues to make a positive and lasting impact in our city's landscape. Some of the Council's tree planting could be aligned to fit in with the one million trees project.

3.7

I. Council's Tree Policy & Request from Emma Little Pengelly, MP.

At the People and Communities Committee meeting on 12th February 2019, the Committee was informed of a request received by Officers from Emma Little Pengelly MP to plant 5 small trees on Council land as part of the Queens Commonwealth Tree Canopy Project in March 2019. The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the matter to enable a report to be submitted to a future meeting which would detail any policy for such requests.

3.8 Officers have considered and drafted a policy position for dealing with any such requests as detailed below;

Permission for future tree planting requests may be granted by the People and Communities Committee on a request by request basis. Any tree planting proposals/request received by the Council should fit in and be aligned with the Council's 'Tree Management Plan' for that individual Park/Open Space as advised by Council Officers within City and Neighbourhood Services'

3.9 Financial & Resource Implications

I. The Planting of One Million Trees over a 15 year period

Officer time dedicated to this project will be determined after further discussions with BMRG.

II. Council's Tree Policy

There are no Financial or Human Resource implications other than officer time.

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no known Equality/ Good Relation/Rural needs issues associated with this report.”

The Committee:

1. agreed to defer consideration of the request to plant 5 small trees to mark Her Majesty the Queens' Commonwealth Tree Canopy Project, until the August meeting, for discussion at the Party Group Leaders meeting;
2. agreed, in principle, that it would become the lead partnership facilitator for the project which had a goal to plant one million trees in the City over the next 15 years;
3. noted that the One Million Trees commitment was subject to further officer level discussions with Belfast Metropolitan Residents Group (BMRG) to clarify the level of officer resource required to support any facilitation role between the BMRG and the interested organisations, noting that there would be no Council financial contribution; and
4. agreed to invite the Belfast Metropolitan Residents Group (BMRG) to a future meeting to discuss the One Million Trees initiative.

Update on Graffiti Control

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 **At Committee on 4th December 2018, Members endorsed a number of actions to be undertaken in relation to the Council's approach to dealing with the control and removal of graffiti throughout the city. This followed a Notice of Motion, proposed by Councillor Boyle and seconded by Councillor Dudgeon as follows:**

'This Council recognises the damage caused by and unsightliness of the growing amount of graffiti within our City centre and our neighbourhoods, on our shutters, our walls, our doors, our utility boxes etc.

As the Council has the power under Article 18 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland)

Order 1985 to remove or obliterate any graffiti which, in the opinion of Council, is detrimental to the amenity of any land in the district, pro-active policies and procedures for addressing the problem need to now be put in place, perhaps on the lines of those adopted in 2016 by Ards and North Down Borough Council. Accordingly, the Council agrees to allocate the necessary funding and resources, or the reprioritisation of existing resources, to tackle the environmental scourge of graffiti in the City.'

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

- 1.2 It was agreed at the December Committee meeting that a progress report would be brought back to Committee to update on actions undertaken to date.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to apprise Committee of actions and ongoing work in relation to the control and removal of graffiti across the city.
- 2.0 Recommendations
- 2.1 The Committee is asked to
- Note the update provided in this report.
- 3.0 Main Report
- Key Issues
- 3.1 At the Committee meeting held on 4th December 2018, the following actions to tackle the issue of graffiti were agreed:
- 3.2 Re-engagement with external partners, statutory agencies and utility companies to raise the profile of problematic graffiti within their organisations, highlight their responsibilities in relation to graffiti removal on their properties and sites, and to agree actions for them to address the issue of graffiti, including site monitoring and graffiti reduction and removal programmes.
- 3.3 The Enforcement Manager has continued to engage with the key utility companies and statutory bodies. These organisations have been advised by Council, of the current concerns in relation to graffiti activity on their property and in response, they have outlined their current approaches to its removal. Some of the organisations carry out a programme of maintenance whilst others only remove contentious graffiti or graffiti which has been the subject of complaint. In one case,

a utility company (Virgin Media) has agreed to undertake a proactive maintenance programme on their equipment. Contacts for these companies and organisations have been established and they have been advised that they may receive more frequent requests from Council, highlighting the need to remove graffiti from their property.

3.4 Following engagement with statutory agencies and utility companies, officers within the enforcement team will undertake a proactive monitoring regime by identifying hotspot areas and engage with the respective statutory agencies and utility companies to achieve removal of the graffiti.

3.5 Enforcement Officers have commenced a monitoring programme, to identify and highlight property and equipment that requires the removal of graffiti. There have been challenges associated with this process, as there are so many organisations who now own street furniture and, in the absence of signage identifying the owner of the property, officers have to spend considerable time ascertaining ownership. To overcome this problem, we are exploring the use of GIS systems to assist in the identification of ownership in relation to equipment owned by the utility companies. Notwithstanding this, a number of organisations have responded positively and have already undertaken the necessary work to remove the graffiti. Unfortunately in a number of instances, the graffiti has re-appeared within days of its removal.

3.6 Where appropriate, the use of FPNs and Defacement Removal Notices.

The use of Defacement Removal Notices will be kept under review and can only be used when all avenues of engagement have been exhausted. Fixed Penalty Notices can only be issued to those observed in the activity of defacing property and detection of such offences is extremely challenging, given that the majority of the offences occur during hours of darkness.

3.7 Continued engagement with Probation Board NI (PBNI) to further develop the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and support, where appropriate, the effective removal of non-contentious graffiti in all areas of the city.

A series of meetings has taken place between the Council and the PBNI to explore better and more effective use of this resource, to provide a city wide service to owners of private

property who have requested assistance with the removal of graffiti from their property.

Since Christmas, the graffiti bus has experienced operational issues which has resulted in it being unavailable for a number of weeks. Work is however continuing to ensure that robust procedures and appropriate resources are provided in the deployment of the graffiti bus to maximise its contribution to graffiti removal across the city. To assist with the promotion of this service within local communities, officers from the Community Safety Team will be providing additional support by identifying properties defaced by graffiti which could benefit from the services of the graffiti bus.

3.8 Develop a Graffiti Removal Policy.

A policy has been drafted and will be presented to Committee at a later date subject to equality screening.

3.9 In response to reported contentious or offensive graffiti, Council will continue to obliterate this type of graffiti from private property following completion of the relevant disclaimer form.

The City and Neighbourhood Services Department has a limited budget to deal with graffiti removal and at present resources are sufficient to deal with graffiti removal from Council properties and sites together with the removal of reported contentious graffiti from public places and private property. In the period January 2019 to March 2019, the Council responded to 81 Service requests for removal of contentious or offensive graffiti.

In addition to the above work activity, the following projects, aimed at addressing graffiti issues are currently being delivered:

3.10 The Belfast Canvas Pilot Project

At the March 2019 meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee, Members agreed to a pilot project in the city centre to take forward a public art project involving utility boxes similar to the Dublin Canvas project. This pilot public art project has been undertaken in partnership with Destination Cathedral Quarter and Belfast One Business Improvement District and is aimed at improving the look and feel of the area through animation. In addition the project aims to decrease incidences of graffiti/tagging, fly posting, and other anti-social behaviours associated with utility boxes. Professional street artists, collaborating with community

groups and university students, will decorate privately owned utility boxes in the city's main retail heart, to transform them into unique works of art, adding colour to the cityscape. Nine utility boxes have already been transformed under this scheme and a total of twenty four boxes will be completed by June/July 2019. Following an evaluation of Phase 1, a more detailed proposal will be brought back to Committee for delivery of Phase 2 on the Belfast Rapid Transport route. It is anticipated the timescale in relation to Phase 2 will be August 2019.

3.11 City Centre Rejuvenation

Following the Primark Fire in September 2018, additional funding of £100,000 has been provided to enable the Council to provide enhanced cleansing within the immediate retail area affected by the fire. This funding will enable additional resources to be deployed for deep cleaning street surfaces and the provision of graffiti removal services to the commercial/retail sector whose premises have been defaced with graffiti. This project commenced in mid-May 2019 and will continue over the next six months. Graffiti on shop front shutters is a prevalent feature of the street scene within the city centre area and options to address this issue are currently being explored.

3.12 Financial & Resource Implications

There are no additional financial resource implications associated with the work relating to the activities referred to in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.6 of this report, which is being undertaken within existing resources. Funding in relation to the Belfast Canvas Pilot project and the City Centre Rejuvenation has been approved.

3.13 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

Council recognises the importance of removing contentious or offensive graffiti as quickly as possible to reduce fear and community tension and will continue to operate this approach using existing resources.

A policy in relation to Councils approach in dealing with graffiti removal has been drafted and will be subject to equality screening.

There are no rural needs implications.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Update on Grass Cutting at Sites
not Owned by Belfast City Council**

The Strategic Director advised the Committee that a review of grass cutting arrangements relating to sites not owned by the Council had commenced. He explained that the review was exploring opportunities to enhance the existing provisions, including pilot projects, an improvement plan and, in conjunction with Corporate Communications, funding options such as sponsorship schemes.

He highlighted to the Members that, given the ongoing financial pressures faced by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and Transport NI, grass cutting had been reduced, with further cutting only undertaken in respect of road safety.

The Committee was advised that discussions had taken place with the Department for Infrastructure and Transport NI and that engagement would continue to inform enhancements to future arrangements.

The Strategic Director explained to the Committee that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting in March, had agreed the draft Belfast Open Spaces Strategy and that it was anticipated that it would shortly be released for public consultation. He highlighted to the Members that the Strategy would support future neighbourhood based plans and the ongoing grass cutting review by helping to inform future approaches to address the need for maintenance of non-Council open spaces.

He explained that, since 2016, the Council had supplemented grass cutting arrangements for DfI and Transport NI, by providing five cuts per annum at the following sites, on the basis that each organisation contributed resources within existing budgets:

- Michael Ferguson roundabout;
- Kingsway Embankment, Dunmurry;
- Knock Dual Carriageway; and
- Cregagh Road with Knock dual carriageway.

He advised the Committee that it was being proposed that a further site, McKinsty Road, be added to that list.

The Committee was advised that the annual cost of grass cutting, up to a maximum of five times per year, of the McKinsty Road site would be £5,000. The Strategic Director confirmed to the Members that this amount was not included within the estimates for 2019/2020 and that resource would have to be found via in-year Department adjustments.

A Member stated that, while he was supportive of the addition of the site, officers should consider reducing the number of cuts from five in order to include further non-Council owned sites. He suggested that officers, in its future discussions, should consider the inclusion of a site outside Milltown Cemetery and a site at the Monagh by-pass.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

After discussion, the Committee:

1. noted the continued actions which were being undertaken as part of the ongoing review of grass cutting arrangements at sites that were not owned by the Council;
2. agreed that a further report in relation to the review of grass cutting arrangements would be submitted to a future meeting; and
3. agreed to the inclusion of a site at McKinsty Road within the grass cutting arrangements that the Council currently operated with the Department for Infrastructure and Transport NI.

Glasgow Rose Trials 22nd – 23rd August 2019

The Strategic Director advised the Committee that the City of Glasgow International Rose Trials would take place on 22nd and 23rd August, 2019. He explained that the Council had been invited by Glasgow City Council to participate in the trial judging, with representatives having attended the event regularly over the years. He added that representatives from Glasgow City Council had reciprocated each year by supporting Belfast City Council's rose trial event at Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park.

The Strategic Director advised the Members that attendance costs, including accommodation and flights, were approximately £350 per person and that it was proposed that the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson and the Director of Neighbourhood Services, or their nominees, would attend.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to the attendance of the Director of Neighbourhood Services, or his nominee, at the Glasgow Rose Trials on 22nd and 23rd August, 2019.

**Request for use of Cathedral and Jubilee Gardens,
Falls Park, Botanic Gardens and Woodvale Park**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 Members are advised that a number of requests have been received seeking use of our Parks and Open Spaces to host specific events, namely.**

	Park	Dates	Event
I	Cathedral Gardens & Jubilee Gardens	20 th Sep – 21 st Sep 2019	Culture Night
II	Falls Park	3 rd Aug – 10 th Aug 2019	Feile an Phobail

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

III	Botanic Gardens	28 th August 2021	City of Belfast Grand Black Chapter
IV	Woodvale Park	9 th – 11 th July 2019	Woodvale festival

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are recommended to approve the use of our parks, as detailed below, for the hosting of specific named events;

	Park	Dates	Event
I	Cathedral Gardens & Jubilee Gardens	20 th Sep – 21 st Sep 2019	Culture Night
II	Falls Park	3 rd Aug – 10 th Aug 2019	Feile an Phobail
III	Botanic Gardens	28 th Aug 2021	City of Belfast Grand Black Chapter
IV	Woodvale Park	9 th – 11 th July 2019	Woodvale festival

Members are asked to note that the agreement to host these events will be subject to the completion of the appropriate event management plan, satisfying all statutory licensing responsibilities, relevant consultation and agreement of satisfactory terms by the Strategic Director City & Neighbourhood Services

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 Culture Night, Cathedral Gardens and Jubilee Gardens, 20th – 21st September 2019. Cathedral Quarter Trust plan to host Culture Night Belfast at Cathedral Gardens and at Jubilee Gardens on Friday 20 to Saturday 21 September 2019.

- **The event will result in the closure of Cathedral Gardens and Jubilee Gardens for 3 days.**
- **Set-up will be from 3pm on Thursday 19 September and dismantle will be completed by 11pm on Saturday 21 September.**

Culture Night Belfast is a free, family-friendly event based in the city centre, with the Cathedral Quarter as its primary hub.

The event serves as a high-profile platform for artists and cultural organisations to showcase their work, and offer audiences the opportunity to explore new art forms and activities.

The organisers intend to bring a stage, marquees, food vendors, arts and crafts, live music and face painters at Cathedral Gardens and will provide live music and street entertainment at Jubilee Gardens. Organisers estimate that 10,000 people will attend the event. Organisers will provide toilets, first aid cover and stewards at Cathedral Gardens and first aid cover at Jubilee Gardens.

Set up will commence at 3pm on Thursday 19 September, with the main event taking place on Friday 20 September from 1pm to 9pm, and Saturday 21 September from 10am to 5pm. The event will be dismantled and the site will be clear by 11pm on Saturday 21 September.

Previously, this event was delivered over one day however this year the request has been extended to provide for a longer and enhanced programme. The proposed event in 2019 will result in the closure of Cathedral Gardens and Jubilee Gardens for 3 days.

3.2 Feile an Phobail, Falls Park, 3rd -10th August 2019.

Feile an Phobail have requested the use of Falls Park to host the West Belfast Festival, which is due to take place from 3 - 10 August 2018. Set up for the event will begin on 29 July 2018, with take down planned for the 19 August 2018.

Since August 2006, Feile an Phobail has organised a number of West Belfast Festival events at Belfast City Council venues.

The events would be similar to previous years which included:

- Carnival parade through Falls Park
- International Boxing event
- Teddy Bears picnic in Falls Park
- Feile family entertainment day in the park, music events and family entertainment.
- An occasional licence will be applied for by the organisers for the sale of alcohol and an entertainment licence for the period of the event.
- Guided historical tours in the City Cemetery which would be charged for appropriately by the tour provider.

The event will require the closure of all or a substantial proportion of the facility and will have alcohol on sale during some of the events.

Organisers will be reminded that the current ground conditions and location of this event may have to change due to adverse weather conditions.

3.3 City of Belfast Grand Black Chapter, Botanic Gardens, 28th August 2019.

City of Belfast Grand Black Chapter have requested the use of Botanic Gardens to facilitate passing through of a parade from City Hall to Mark the Centenary of the Formation of Northern Ireland.

The demonstration will take place on Saturday 28 August 2021 and will commence at 10am from City Hall and pass through Botanic gardens at approximately 12 noon, exiting through the Stranmillis embankment gate by 2.00pm and will board buses parked on Stranmillis embankment. There will be no return parade from Botanic Gardens.

The route proposed will include passing buildings with a significant relevance to the Centenary including City Hall, Ulster Hall and Union Theological College, Botanic Avenue, which was the building used for the newly formed Northern Ireland Parliament between 1921 – 1932 while Stormont was being built.

3.4 Woodvale Festival, Woodvale Park, 9th – 11th August 2019

A request has been received from Twaddell and Woodvale Residents Association seeking use and hire of the facilities at Woodvale Park for the staging of the Woodvale Festival:

Since 2008, Twaddell and Woodvale Residents Association has organised a number of events in Woodvale Park. The 2019 event will be similar to last year which included:

- Education and arts programme
- Family and childrens concert
- Main concert
- Community live music and performance showcase
- Marching band event
- Family fun day
- Creative arts arena
- Main Live concert (2)
- Traditional bonfire

Organisers will be reminded that the current ground conditions and location of this event may have to change due to adverse weather conditions.

3.5 Financial & Resource Implications

- II. Falls Park for Feile an Phobail &
- IV. Woodvale Park for Woodvale Festival

Staff may be required to work additional hours to cover the events outside normal hours and there may be other operational costs to the Council. These will be charged to the hirer, in the form of an agreed charge for the use of Council facilities.

Council officers will liaise with organisers in relation to the potential environmental impact of this event. A reinstatement bond will be required to be paid to the council before the event to cover any reinstatement of grounds after the event; this bond will be £10,000.

3.5 Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessment

No Equality or Good Relations implications have been identified, however, this is being monitored on an ongoing basis.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Belfast Youth Forum Progress

The Committee considered a report which provided Members with an update on the ongoing work of the Council’s Youth Forum, as well as the Children and Young People Unit’s “Ur City 2” fund.

The Committee was apprised of the Youth Forum’s development of a youth participation Charter for the Council, where authority was being sought for a scoping exercise to be carried out.

The Members were advised of a number of the Youth Forum’s campaigns, which, amongst others, included a poverty campaign entitled “Poverty: it’s not a choice”, and a mental health research project called the “Elephant in the Room”.

A number of Members paid tribute to the hard work of the staff and the members of the Belfast Youth Forum, particularly in relation to the Elephant in the Room campaign.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

After discussion, the Committee:

1. noted the main developments and updates in the report;
2. agreed to establish a joint engagement arrangement between the Belfast Youth Forum and the People & Communities Committee, through the facilitation of up to 3 Special People and Communities meetings per annum (previously referenced within Schedule of Meetings, Item 1d); and
3. agreed to carry out a scoping exercise on the creation of a Youth Participation Charter (YPC) for BCC.

Notice of Traffic Regulation Order 2019

The Committee was advised that, in March 2016, the Council had made available £700,000 from the Capital Programme to install alleygates across the City. The Members were advised that Phase 4 had been divided into 3 sub-phases, with Phase 4(a) having been completed in March 2018 and Phase 4(b) in October 2018. The Strategic Director explained that he was now seeking approval for Phase 4(c) to proceed.

He advised the Committee that a pre-consultation exercise with affected residents and Statutory bodies had been carried out and that the Notice of Intention had been advertised on Friday, 5th April. He confirmed that no formal objections to the Traffic Regulation Orders had been received.

He outlined that Legal Services had recommended that alleygates at the proposed locations could proceed, as the Council could be satisfied that the requirements of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environments Act (2011) had been met in establishing that the areas were affected by crime and anti-social behaviour.

He explained that he was seeking formal approval to make the Traffic Regulation Orders enabling gates to be installed in the following areas:

- To the rear of Nos. 1-73 Grace Avenue and to the rear of Nos. 1-35 Greenville Court.
- To the rear of Nos. 1-9 Abetta Parade and to the side of Nos. 5 and 7 Abetta Parade.
- To the rear of Nos. 70-76 Ravensdale Street and to side of Nos. 70 and 72 Ravensdale Street.
- To the rear of Nos. 48-76 Castlereagh Road and to the side of No. 2 Clara Street.
- To the rear of Nos. 62-72 Jonesboro Park.
- To the rear of Nos 1-83 Rosebery Road, Nos. 4-88 Rosyln Street and to the side of Nos. 22 and 24 Rosyln Street and to the side of No. 2 Rosyln Street and No. 119a My Lady's Road.
- To the rear of Nos. 103-119 My Lady's Road, Nos. 1-31 London Road, Nos.1-13 Canada Street and to the side of No. 1 London Road.
- To the rear of Nos. 2-36 Donard Street, 164-176 Ravenhill Road and to the side of No.2 Donard Street.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

- To the rear of Nos. 38-80 Donard Street, The rear of Nos. 47-93 Richardson Street and to the side of No. 4a Canada Street.
- To the rear of Nos. 11-29 Donard Street and the rear of Nos. 20-38 London Street
- To the rear of Nos. 41-89 Donard Street, Nos. 40-80 London Street, Nos. 33-47 London Road and to the side of No. 89 Donard Street and No. 80 London Street.
- To the rear of Nos. 33-63 London Street, Nos. 6-36 Ravenhill Street, 49-93 London Road and to the sides of No. 63 London Street, No. 36 Ravenhill Street and No. 6 Ravenhill Street.
- To the rear of Nos. 2a-64 Florida Drive.
- To the rear of Nos. 1-7 Ardilea Drive, Nos. 7-13 Ardilea Street and to the side of No. 7 Ardilea Street.
- To the rear of Nos. 1-25 Jamaica Street, Nos. 10-19 Havana Court and to the side of Nos. 15 and 17 Jamaica Street.
- To the rear of Nos. 2-90 Stratford Gardens and Nos.92-172 Alliance Avenue.
- To the rear of Nos. 174-276 Alliance Avenue.
- To the rear of Nos. 2-68 Velsheda Court and to the rear of Nos. 70-112 Velsheda Park.
- To the rear of Nos 2a-58 Rosebank Street and to the rear of Nos. 1a-55 Columbia Street.
- To the rear of Nos. 234-274 Limestone Road, Nos. 1-39 Lothair Avenue, Nos. 52-54 Atlantic Avenue and to the side of No. 54 Atlantic Avenue.
- To the rear of Nos. 156-166 North Queen Street and to the rear of Nos. 30-38 Glenrosa Link.
- To the rear of Nos. 145-173 University Street and to the rear of Nos. 11-47 Fitzroy Avenue and to the side of 1a Dudley Street and to the side of No. 173 University Avenue.
- To the rear of Nos. 82-112 Sandy Row, Nos. 83-111 Charles Street and to the side of Nos. 90 and 92 Sandy Row.
- To the rear of Nos. 2-10 Mowhan Street.
- To the rear of Nos. 2-36 Moonstone Street and to the rear of Nos. 615-643 Lisburn Road.
- To the rear of Nos. 38-54 Moonstone Street, 1-7 Capstone Street, Nos. 645-667 Lisburn Road and to the side of No. 54 Moonstone Street.
- To the rear of Nos 6-38 St Jude's Parade and to the side of Nos. 38 and 40 St Jude's Parade.
- To the rear of Nos. 2a-38 Florenceville Avenue, 3-39 Rossmore Avenue 473-477 Ormeau Road and to the side of No. 3 Rossmore Avenue and of Nos. 38 and 40 Florenceville Ave.
- To the rear of Nos. 2-34 Rossmore Avenue, Nos. 1-33 Ardmore Avenue, Nos.479-483 Ormeau Road and to the side of No. 2 Rossmore Avenue
- To the rear of Nos. 2-78 Olympia Drive.
- To the rear of Nos. 8-54 Eliza Street Close and to the rear of Nos.11-61 Upper Stanfield Street and to the rear of Nos. 3-13 Welsh Street.
- To the rear of Nos. 9-13 Glasvey Close, Nos. 15-19 Glasvey Close, Nos. 21-37 Glasvey Close, Nos. 22-38 Glasvey Close and to the side of No. 13 Glasvey Close, Nos 19 and 21 Glasvey Close, Nos 37 and 38 Glasvey Close and to the side of No. 32 Glasvey Close.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

- To the rear of Nos. 29-47 Rodney Parade, Nos. 2-60 Rodney Drive, 62-126 St James's Road and to the sides of No. 62 St James's Road, No. 126 St James's Road, No. 2 Rodney Drive and to the side of No. 60 Rodney Drive.
- To the rear of Nos. 2-80 St Katherine Road and Nos.109-185 St James's Road.

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council that it pass a resolution to make the Belfast City Council Traffic Regulation Order 2019 for Phase 4(c) for the locations as set out above.

Consultation on Petroleum License

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 Members are advised that DfE has recently commenced consultation into an application by EHA Exploration Ltd. for Petroleum Licence PLA1/16. DfE is simultaneously consulting on a second licence application (PLA2/16) by Tamboran Resources (UK) Limited, relating to the Lough Allen Basin and encompassing 608 km² of Fermanagh and Omagh local government district lands to the west of Upper and Lower Lough Erne. The PLA1/16 licence application encompasses an area of approximately 1,134 km², including wards within Antrim And Newtownabbey, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, Lisburn and Castlereagh, Mid Ulster and Belfast borough and city councils. A map illustrating the extent of the licence area, together with a list of the Belfast City Council wards included is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. DfE has advised that an oil or gas field often lies directly below only a small area on the ground surface, and they are relatively rare and difficult to find, so having a large licence area allows the Licensee to understand the local geology more fully and increases their chances of making a discovery.

1.2 In commencing the consultation exercise, DfE has advised that in assessing previous Petroleum Licence applications, the Department would have consulted on the basis of an *'intention to award'*, having already obtained Ministerial approval. In November 2018 however, and in the continuing absence of an Assembly or Minister, the Secretary of State published new guidance to government Departments entitled *'Guidance on decision-making for Northern Ireland Departments during the period for Northern Ireland Executive formation'*. In line with this guidance, DfE has completed a Public Interest Test and concluded that it should continue all necessary preparatory work to ensure that a decision on the Petroleum Licence application can be taken as soon as possible after a Minister is appointed.

- 1.3 The objective of DfE's current consultation is therefore to ensure that the Department has taken account of the range of opinions in preparation for making a recommendation to a future Minister as to whether or not a Petroleum Licence should be granted to the applicant. DfE has stated that it wishes to ensure that the Department has an informed view of any issues that may have the capacity to impact on the granting of the Licence or on its terms and conditions.
- 1.4 DfE has advised that persons wishing to provide representations in respect of Petroleum Licence Application PLA1/16 must do so on, or before 5th July 2019. DfE has further advised that once the consultation has closed, the Department will consider the Petroleum Licence application, along with consultation comments received. A recommendation on the award of the Licence and any required conditions will eventually be passed to a future Minister for consideration.
- 1.5 DfE has confirmed however, that any final decision to grant a Petroleum Licence in NI will have to await Ministerial and / or Executive approval.
- 2.0 Recommendations
- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- Note the contents of this report and;
 1. Agree to provide consultation comments regarding the granting of the licence or on the licence's terms and conditions ahead of the DfE deadline of 5th July 2019 and that
 2. A draft Committee consultation response is attached as Appendix 2
- 3.0 Main report
- 3.1 DfE has advised that no oil or gas has been commercially produced in Northern Ireland (NI) to date, meaning that NI is currently entirely dependent on imports to meet its oil and gas requirements. DfE has further advised that small quantities of oil and gas have been recorded in some exploration wells in NI, meaning that certain areas remain a prospect for oil and gas in porous sandstones at depths of 1-3 km below ground level.
- 3.2 EHA Exploration Limited has recently submitted an application for a Petroleum Licence covering the area denoted

within Appendix 1 to this report. The proposed licenced area overlies part of a geological basin, the nature of the underlying geology meaning that there may be potential for oil to be present.

- 3.3 Within NI, petroleum licences include the following three components and time scales; (i) a five-year Initial Term, during which an agreed work programme of exploration must be carried out; (ii) a five-year Second Term, during which a field development programme must be approved; and (iii) a 20-year Third Term, called the production period.
- 3.4 During the Initial Term, exploration activities are focussed on identifying a suitable drilling target. Before the end of year three though, the Licensee must decide whether they wish to proceed to the drilling of an exploration well or to relinquish the Licence. If the Licensee decides that they wish to drill an exploration well, they must enter into a contractual arrangement with the landowner for permission to use a site and obtain all the permits required to carry out the drilling operations. If the Licensee completes their work programme to the satisfaction of the Department, they can opt to continue the Licence into the Second Term which will normally involve the drilling of additional wells and the submission of a Field Development Plan if any commercially viable discoveries are found. If the Field Development Plan is approved by DfE and the Licensee obtains planning permission and other consents, the Licence may enter the Production Period, which includes the development of the field, the commercial production of oil and/or gas, followed by the eventual decommissioning of the production facilities at the end of the production phase.
- 3.5 Initial works to be undertaken therefore include using geochemical surveys as an initial reconnaissance tool to identify areas suitable for further detailed exploration methods. The applicant proposes carrying out soil sampling and using updated analytical techniques to pinpoint any indicators of subsurface oil or gas. The applicant also proposes to survey across known fracture zones, faults and significant geological boundaries.
- 3.6 Following the initial assessment, works focus on the most promising areas for follow-up geochemistry and geophysical surveys. Both passive electromagnetic and seismic reflection methods are proposed to image the subsurface geological structures in these areas. The objective of these surveys is to understand the structure of the rocks at depth and to identify one or more areas where oil or gas might be trapped in the sandstone reservoir rocks. If analysis of these structures

results in the identification of one or more drilling targets, the applicant would inform DfE of its intention to drill one or more exploration wells. The applicant has indicated at this stage that they would favour the use of slimhole drilling techniques to minimise the footprint and operational impact of any exploration wells. The EHA Exploration Ltd. proposed draft work programme is as follows:

3.7 Years 1 – 3 (Part I)

- Analysis and modelling of existing exploration data and the results of Tellus airborne geophysics and ground geochemical surveys.
- Reconnaissance geochemical surveys over whole Licence area.
- Geophysical surveys;
 - Electromagnetic surveys
 - 2D seismic acquisition 300 – 450 line kms
- Further modelling and analysis of new data.

3.8 Years 4 – 5 (Part II)

- Plan and design the exploration well(s).
- Application to drill (planning, technical, environmental).
- Subject to obtaining all necessary permits, drill exploration well.
- Analyse results.
- Plug and abandon well, restore wellsite or, if successful, complete well for possible future production.

3.9 A draft Committee consultation response is attached as Appendix 2 to this report for consideration.

3.10 Financial & Resource Implications

There are no financial or resource implications at this time other than officer time to review the consultation.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment

This is a request to respond to a consultation by DfE, the Good Relations and Rural Needs Assessment are not known by Council at this time.”

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

During discussion, a number of Members stated that they had a number of concerns in relation to the proposals and the Committee agreed:

1. that its response to the consultation would be that a Petroleum Licence not be granted, given the potential impacts on the environment and human health, concerns regarding insufficient information and analysis/evidence provided by the Department for the Economy (DfE); and
2. that officers would amend and incorporate the Committee's comments into the draft response ahead of the DfE's deadline of 5th July 2019.

The response, as amended, reads:

"Dear Sir/ Madam,

The People and Communities Committee has considered the matter of the Department for the Economy's (DfE) recent consultation into Petroleum Licence Application PLA1/16 by EHA Exploration Limited at its meeting of 4th June 2019 and would provide the following comments by way of response.

The Committee notes that DfE, in the presence of an Assembly and Minister, would normally have consulted on a Petroleum Licence application on the basis of an 'intention to award', having already obtained Ministerial approval. DfE has advised however that under current circumstances and having regard to the November 2018 Secretary of State, 'Guidance on decision-making for Northern Ireland Departments during the period for Northern Ireland Executive formation', the Department has completed a public interest test and concluded that the Department should continue all necessary preparatory works to ensure that a decision on this Petroleum Licence application can be taken as soon as possible after a Minister is appointed.

Although DfE has initiated an eight-week consultation exercise, running from 7th May 2019 until 5th July 2019, this Committee would express its concern that the consultation exercise has been commenced directly after the 2019 Northern Ireland Local Government elections have been concluded and at a point where local government Committee memberships and governance arrangements are still being finalised. The Committee would therefore contend that given the significance and extent of Petroleum Licence Application PLA1/16 for Belfast City and for other council areas, the Department has afforded insufficient time for Petroleum Licence Application PLA1/16 to be adequately scrutinised by Committee and Council and for a comprehensive technical response to the licence application to be provided to them to inform our response to the Department.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 4th June, 2019**

Nevertheless, given the timeframe set forth by DfE, the Committee has reviewed the content of the Redacted Application Form for Petroleum Licence Application PLA1/16 and various other supporting documents and would comment as follows.

The Committee has concerns that the licence applied for relates to an area of some 1,134 km², described as west, south and east of Lough Neagh and geographically illustrated in Appendix E Area Under Consideration. The area applied for therefore covers wards within Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, Mid Ulster Council and Belfast City Council. Within the Belfast City Council area, wards principally affected are those located in the southwest, west and north of the city; thereby potentially affecting in excess of 100,000 residents living within these areas. The proposed licenced area also encompasses aspects of the Belfast Hills, including Black Mountain and Divis.

Given the potential impacts on the environment or human health, and Members' concerns regarding insufficient information and analysis or evidence provided by the DfE on this and concern over the long term sustainable development impact for NI, the People and Communities Committee has agreed not to support the granting of this Licence by the Department."

Positive Animation of Parks/Open Spaces

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 For Members information, previous People and Communities Committee requested regular updates on ongoing work to encourage positive animation of Council parks/open spaces as a way of deterring anti-social behaviour and vandalism.**
- 1.2 This emerged as a result of ongoing concerns raised with Elected Members about the impact of anti-social behaviour and vandalism in parks/open spaces and the impact of this on the positive use and animation of these spaces in communities.**
- 1.3 Ongoing review of reported anti-social behaviour and feedback from Elected Members identified a small number of parks and open spaces where it was agreed a co-ordinated focus with other statutory organisations and communities would add value. These were Falls Park/City Cemetery, Orangefield Park/Avoniel Park, Marrowbone Park, Dunville Park and Ballysillan Park.**

1.4 Additionally, at Full Council in March 2019, Members requested an update to a future People and Communities Committee on the ongoing work to positively animate these parks/open spaces and how Council managed ongoing vandalism.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to;

- note the contents of this report and support the ongoing work to positively animate parks/open spaces

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 Positive Animation of Parks/Open Spaces

Ongoing review of local, regional and national best practice indicates that one of the most effective ways of addressing anti-social behaviour and vandalism is to positively animate parks/open spaces by creating a sense of ownership and empowerment amongst users. This includes young people, who often gather in parks/open spaces as a way to positively socialise. It is however, recognised that young people are often gathering in parks/open spaces at times when they are closed and particularly after dark which can create additional vulnerabilities for those young people.

3.2 General Animation

Council Parks Outreach and Open Spaces and Active Living Teams work closely with local schools, youth and community groups throughout the year running positive events and activities in our parks/open spaces. This work helps create a positive relationship between participants and the parks/open spaces and increased respect and civic pride. Examples include:

- Outdoor Education Sessions
- Biodiversity Sessions
- Park Life Schools Programme
- Park Life Saturday Club
- Family Fun Days
- Growing Workshops
- Historical and Cultural Guided Walks
- Community Clean Ups

3.3 Since 1 February 2019 over 100 events and activities have taken place in Council parks/open spaces to positively animate those spaces.

3.4 Council also works with a range of external organisations who support Councils' objective of positively animating our parks/open spaces. These include community and cultural events, Park Runs and music events.

3.5 Targeted Animation

In addition to general animation taking place across a range of parks/open spaces in the city, a targeted programme of animation is delivered in those priority parks/open spaces as identified at 1.3. Characteristics of these programmes of animation are:

- Takes place at times when anti-social behaviour is more likely to take place e.g. weekends, school holidays, evenings
- Takes place in those priority parks/open spaces
- Is integrated with and adds value to existing youth and community provision around these parks/open spaces (including post primary schools)
- Targets those most at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour
- Ensures appropriate arrangements are in place to manage any safeguarding or general vulnerability issues

3.6 Specific examples of targeted animation since 1 February 2019 in priority parks/open spaces include:

- Detached Youth Outreach
- Late night youth diversionary activities in 3G facilities
- Evenings youth and community events

3.7 Vandalism

Officers regularly review requisitions for repairs at parks/open spaces due to vandalism, criminal damage or arson. There has been a marked reduction in serious vandalism, criminal damage or arson at all parks and open spaces, however, there remains a small number of more serious and persistent issues in West Belfast.

3.8 Unfortunately, Council does not have a system in place at present which formally records the reason a repair has been requested i.e. as a result of vandalism and the associated

cost. However, this will be specified in to the new system which is to be procured in the coming months.

3.9 Partnership Working

Promoting the positive use of parks/open spaces and reducing anti-social behaviour/vandalism is not something the Council can achieve in isolation and requires extremely high levels of partnership working. Partners involved include Council, PSNI, Education Authority, Youth Organisations, Community Organisations, Translink, local schools and other revenue programmes (e.g. Urban Villages, Fresh Start, PEACE IV).

3.10 Supporting Innovation

An opportunity presented itself in 2018 for Council to avail of Department for Economy funding to work with the SME sector (including community/voluntary organisations) on opportunities to use innovation and technology in encouraging positive use and deter negative use of parks/open spaces.

3.11 £100,000 was secured for Phase 1 which has worked with five SME's to develop prototype options which will be field tested for a two week period only in five parks/open spaces across the city during June 2019. Subject to satisfactory field testing, an 'in principle' application for Phase 2 funding was submitted to the Department for Economy for further development of maximum two of these prototypes. Initial indications are a further £100,000 is likely to be made available during 19/20 and subject to satisfactory monitoring a further £125,000 during 20/21. Phase 2 is designed to work proactively in partnership with communities and other users of parks/open spaces around the further development of the technological solutions. If a formal letter of offer is received, further briefings can be provided for Elected Members either by way of Party Group or Area Working Group on the roll out.

3.12 Data capture has been and will continue to be a part of the technology development. However, data is only gathered where it will give important insight in to how parks/open spaces can be more effectively animated. Additionally, all SME's have been subject to rigorous Data Protection and Privacy Impact Assessments with full legal compliance.

3.13 Financial & Resource Implications

3.14 Staff Resources

The above approach continues to support the values and principles of the City and Neighbourhood Services and wider Corporate Change Programme.

3.15 Financial Resources

All of the above work continues to be accommodated from within existing Council and (D)PCSP revenue budgets. The work is intended to maximise existing resources, reduce duplication and facilitate joined up decision making and resource allocation in the identified parks/open spaces.

3.16 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None have been identified at present, however, this will monitored on an ongoing basis.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Request for the use of Dundonald Cemetery

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from the Dundonald Apprentice Boys of Derry seeking permission to use Dundonald Cemetery to conduct a wreath laying ceremony on 27th June from 7.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.

The Committee agreed to accede to the request and furthermore approved the use of the Cemetery for that purpose on a yearly basis going forward, if required, subject to the Event Organisers resolving all operational issues to the Council’s satisfaction.

Issue raised in advance by a Member

**Cherryvale Playing Fields –
Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McReynolds to raise**

In response to a request from the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McReynolds, the Committee agreed that officers would engage with the Friends of Cherryvale Park in relation to ongoing works at Cherryvale Playing Fields.

Chairperson

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 5th June, 2019

MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hargey (Chairperson);
Alderman Spence; and
Councillors S. Baker, Beattie, Brooks, Ferguson,
Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Hanvey, Heading, Howard,
T. Kelly, Lyons, Murphy, Nicholl, O'Hara and Whyte.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. A. Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and
Development; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Welcome

The Chairperson welcomed the Members to the first meeting of the Committee since the recent Local Government Elections.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Alderman Kingston and Councillor McLaughlin.

Expression of Sympathy

The Chairperson reported that the death had occurred earlier in the day of the mother of Alderman Kingston and, on behalf of the Committee, extended her condolences to the Alderman and his family.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 3rd and 8th April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 21st May.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Flynn declared an interest in relation to item 3(b) – Update on Markets, in that he was a member of the National Market Traders Federation and had submitted an application to trade at St. George's Market and in respect of item 8(a) – Update on Belfast Bikes Scheme, in that his employer had been mentioned within the Committee report, and left the meeting whilst these items were under discussion.

Matters Referred Back from Council/Motions

**Motion – Redevelopment and
Regeneration of the City Centre**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 21st May, had, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), referred the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Lyons and seconded by Councillor McKeown, to the Committee for consideration:

“This Council notes the challenges created by the fire in Bank Buildings and the ongoing Council-led effort to stimulate economic activity in the area using street animation, pop up play parks and other incentives.

The Council notes also that the redevelopment of our city centre as a shared and mixed use space offers traders, residents and visitors a range of economic, social and cultural opportunities.

Noting the Department for Infrastructure’s public consultation on the future use of the streets around Castle Place and Donegall Place, the Council calls for the pedestrianisation of this area.”

The Committee noted that it would have the opportunity to consider the motion later in the meeting, as part of the report on Castle Place and City centre pedestrianisation.

**East Belfast Translink Depot – Response
from Department for Infrastructure**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 10th October, 2018, it had granted approval for officers to meet with Translink representatives to discuss the potential relocation of the East Belfast transport depot. The Committee was reminded further that, at its meeting on 13th February, it had noted that Translink had agreed, in principle, to work collaboratively with the Council, through a feasibility study, to identify potential sites that could deliver its operational and logistical needs. That decision had been amended by the Council to provide that representatives of the Department for Infrastructure be invited also to enter into discussions with officers, prior to proceeding with the study.

The Democratic Services Officer reported that the Department for Infrastructure’s Director of Public Transport Division had, in response to the Council’s invitation, stated that Translink had no plans currently to relocate the East Belfast transport depot and that it continued to play a central role in delivering urban public transport, as it was ideally placed to keep operational costs to a minimum. However, the Department would not rule out the relocation of the depot in the longer term but would need reassurance that an alternative site would offer a similar level of efficiency and cost effectiveness and could be achieved with no financial detriment to Translink. She added that she was aware that the Council had commissioned a study to examine alternative sites and that, should that identify realistic options, those would need to be given full consideration by Translink.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

She had concluded by stating that she would be content to meet with Council representatives to discuss the matter further.

After discussion, the Committee noted the response from the Department for Infrastructure and agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting, once the feasibility study had been completed.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following three 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 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.

Belfast Zoo – Performance Update 2018/19

(Ms. J. Wilson, Business Manager, City and Neighbourhood Services Department, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered a report which outlined the performance of the Zoo for the period from January till March, 2018, under five key areas, namely, Animal Collection/Welfare, Education Services, Financial Performance, Marketing and Events and Visitor Services and provided an update on the Improvement Agenda.

The Business Manager reported that, in terms of the Improvement Agenda, a review of arrangements for lock up, animal escapes and general health and safety requirements had resulted in new shift patterns being agreed. The review had highlighted a legacy issue involving contractual overtime and she provided details of a compromise agreement which had been drafted by the Legal Services Section to address the issue and been circulated to staff. The agreement had included a requirement to buy out contractual overtime, the cost of which would be repaid primarily through savings acquired from the implementation of the new shift patterns. It was hoped that agreements would be signed by staff over the coming weeks.

She stressed that staff and Trades Unions continued to be engaged in the improvement process, through the Zoo Trades Union Forum and improvement group, on issues relating to the aforementioned five key areas, as well working patterns, cost reduction, procurement efficiencies and enhanced customer experiences.

She concluded by recommending that the Committee note the contents of the report and approve the removal of contractual overtime, via the compromise agreement.

In response to concerns which had been raised by the Members, the Business Manager confirmed that the Zoo Trades Union Forum had worked closely and positively

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

with staff and the Council on the issue of contractual overtime and that the overspend in employee costs could be attributed primarily to the deployment of seasonal staff over the period from June till September and of casual staff covering holiday periods and some long-term sickness absence and did not involve zero hours contracts.

The Chief Executive provided an update on the ongoing Strategic Review of the Zoo and pointed out that decisions arising from it would, in light of their financial implications, be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval and subsequently to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for information.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that, in future, all reports relating to staffing or changes to contracts should indicate clearly the extent of engagement with staff and the Trades Unions.

Update on Markets

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on a number of operational and enforcement issues relating to St. George's Market, as well as details of an application for the grant of a Markets Licence.

The Director of Economic Development explained that St. George's Market was a popular tourist attraction and space for local residents, as well as being an ideal location for new business starts and providing a source of income for more than 200 traders. He reminded the Committee that, in 2014, it had commissioned consultants to undertake work around a development plan for the market, which had resulted in changes to staffing structures and some operating hours. Officers were currently examining ways in which the market could be enhanced to meet increasing tourist demand, whilst retaining an important role as an asset for the City, its residents and the businesses which operated within it. It was proposed that consultants again be commissioned to develop a Strategic Development Plan for the market.

He reminded the Committee further that, at its meeting on 3rd April, it had been advised of a number of ongoing areas of work which would be progressed over the coming year and that it would be informed of any proposals which would impact significantly upon the market.

Accordingly, he highlighted the deployment of new mobile ventilation units, with a view to minimising odours and vapour from the cooking of hot food, as well as the increased focus on ensuring compliance with various guidance documents and enforcement policies. The Council's Food Safety Team had made a number of recommendations around the storage of food before and between market days and those would be implemented in the coming weeks. Given the operational implications of those changes, the Markets team would be working closely with other agencies and with traders around, for example, the loading/unloading of food. All changes would be made in line with legislative requirements in order to protect and maintain the reputation of the market as a food destination and unique visitor experience.

He reminded the Committee that anyone wishing to operate a market or car boot sale was required to apply to the Council for a Markets licence. He reported that an

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

application had been received from the Cathedral Quarter Trust to hold a market within St. Anne's Cathedral and the adjoining car park, on Friday, 20th and Saturday, 21st June, as part of Culture Night Belfast. He pointed out that the market would, in line with the aims of the Council's Markets Development Strategy, assist in enhancing the area and would drive footfall into the Cathedral Quarter and the surrounding area.

It was envisaged that there would be up to sixty stalls and operators would be required to submit in advance documentation such as public liability insurance and risk assessments. An operational plan covering, for example, security and stewarding, first aid provision and environmental health information would also be required. Inspections would also be undertaken over the course of the two days, in line with the Markets Rights Policy guidelines.

After discussion, the Committee approved the priority areas of investment in St. George's Market over the coming year, approved the application from the Cathedral Quarter Trust for a Markets Licence and agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to request a report on the use of consultants across the Council.

Update on Strategic Sites Assessment

The Director of City Regeneration and Development submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which provided an update on the emerging findings of the draft Strategic Site Assessment which had been commissioned by the Council, in collaboration with the Department for Communities. The Assessment had examined the development and regeneration potential of the Council's car parks and adjacent public sector land holdings within the City Centre.

Accordingly, she recommended that the Committee:

- i. note the update on the Strategic Sites Assessment work and the initial assessment of the regeneration potential of various Council surface car parks and other Council assets and adjacent public sector lands in the City centre and that there may be potential for synergies and aligned development with adjoining private sector owned lands;
- ii. note the strategic context within which this work is being progressed and the opportunity for the Council to maximise the use of its assets to deliver on its growth ambitions in terms of the Belfast Agenda, the priorities of the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy and aligned Masterplans. This includes the opportunity to use public sector lands to help address the desire for increased city centre living that meets various housing demands. To note also that this work is being taken forward in collaboration with the Department for Communities, with further engagement taking place in terms of the regeneration potential for adjoining Council and Department for Communities' lands;

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

- iii. note the alignment with the Council's Car Parking Strategy recommendations that consideration be given to the optimal use of surface car parks to best support city centre regeneration and maximise valuable City centre land to deliver on wider regeneration outcomes;
- iv. note that further work is to be undertaken on the emerging development proposals for the identified sites, including options for delivery and proposed next steps;
- v. agree to further engagement thereafter with Members, by way of a workshop, to discuss the emerging proposals and proposed next steps, following which reports will be brought back to this Committee and submitted also to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and the People and Communities Committee, as appropriate; and
- vi. agree to commission further work in respect of the impact on supply of off-street car parking taking into account recent and predicted future changes to supply, and including future development proposals and transportation schemes, as well as consideration of the financial implications for the Council.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed:

- i. to undertake engagement with those communities bounding the City centre to discuss plans for the regeneration of the City centre and how that could impact on them in a positive way;
- ii. to invite representatives of the Markets Development Association to a future meeting to show its "We Must Dissent" video; and
- iii. that a report be submitted to a future meeting providing details of air quality levels across the City.

Requests to Present

**Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company/
Pragma Consultants/ Northern Ireland Water**

The Committee agreed to receive at a future meeting a presentation from the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company on the Weavers Cross regeneration scheme, from Pragma Consultants on its retail analysis of the City centre and from Northern Ireland Water on its water and wastewater infrastructure and services.

Growing Businesses and the Economy

**Employability and Skills: Strategic Engagement
and Partnership Working**

The Director of Economic Development submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- i. update the Committee on the work being undertaken by the Council on employability and skills development activities, in conjunction with a number key strategic partners; and
- ii. seek approval to refresh the Belfast Employability and Skills Framework in order to inform the areas of priority investment for future Council engagement in this area of work.

2.0 Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

- i. note the work being undertaken to engage with strategic employability and skills partners to develop and test new approaches to addressing key city challenges including educational attainment, economic inactivity and youth unemployment;
- ii. approve the delivery and associated budgets for 'test and learn' pilots to be undertaken in partnership with the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Department for the Economy (DfE); and
- iii. provide budgetary approval for the joint commissioning of independent expertise to refresh the Belfast Employability and Skills Framework and support the development of the BRCD.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

- 3.1 At the City Growth and Regeneration Committee meeting on 6th March, approval was given for a series of activities under the Working and Learning pillar of the Belfast Agenda. One of**

the thematic areas of this plan focused on strategic engagement, working in partnership with the government departments with statutory responsible for employability and skills. The purpose of this activity is to develop joint areas of working to facilitate better alignment between regional employment interventions and the needs of the Belfast labour market and skills pipeline.

3.2 As reflected within the Working and Learning pillar of the Belfast Agenda, key areas of focus for the city include:

- i. addressing economic inactivity: currently around 30% of the working age population is classified as economically inactive. This has a significant impact on achieving the Council's ambitions around inclusive growth. Likewise – at a time of when the unemployment levels are at an all-time low, there are opportunities to consider how these individuals can create a talent pool to meet the growing demand from Belfast's employers; and**
- ii. creating effective pathways for young people to progress into employment, education and/or training: while the city has a very youthful population, there is also worrying levels of unemployment and economic inactivity among this demographic. Educational attainment levels are clearly one of the causal factors and recent research undertaken as part of the Belfast Skills Barometer has highlighted the fact that the low levels of educational attainment tend to be concentrated in the city's more deprived neighbourhoods.**

3.3 To achieve any real impact on these priority areas highlighted, it is recognised that the Council must work in partnership in order to achieve the city's ambitions. Statutory responsibility and associated budgetary control for employability and skills remains within the remit of a number of government departments, principally the Departments for Communities, Economy and Education. To this end, the Council is actively engaging with these partners, using its community planning authority as a convenor to focus on these challenges and develop collaborative solutions. This work is being explored under the banner of the Working and Learning Board.

3.4 Following preliminary engagement with the key partner organisations, a number of areas have been prioritised, focusing on addressing educational attainment and enhancing access to employment opportunities for those who

are unemployed and/or economically inactive. In addition to these wider partnership forums, the Council is actively engaging with Departments around specific areas of work as outlined below.

Collaboration with DfC

- 3.5 DfC is a key strategic partner for the Council in tackling long-term unemployment and economic inactivity. As the mainstream provider of employability support for the unemployed and those with health conditions and/or disabilities, the Department has a central role in tackling this issue. Over the next three years, many of the mainstream employability programmes including Steps to Success, Workable (NI) and Access to Work will come to an end. The Department is working towards a solution or series of interventions that will aim to provide a flexible support offer, targeting the unemployed and economically inactive and providing them with the assistance that they need to move into sustainable employment.
- 3.6 Given the potential scale of this intervention, the Department has created a Programme Board involving representation from across all the government partners and agencies (including Social Security Agency, Department of Justice and Department for Education). Belfast City Council is also represented. The Board is particularly keen to try out new and flexible approaches in advance of committing to the full new programme. As a result, they have been encouraging a series of ‘test and learn’ pilots to explore these new approaches on a smaller scale over a time-bound period during this development phase. Belfast City Council has committed to working with the Department in three specific pilots, namely:
- i. **Enterprise Pathway**: this will create a new approach to helping economically inactive individuals to start a business. It will involve refocusing the existing ‘Go for It’ programme as well as providing additional mentoring support for the first 12 months of the businesses operation. Personal and skills development support will also be provided along with financial support of up to £3,500 against business start-up costs. The model also integrates the Universal Credit start-up option through which individuals can remain on benefit for the first twelve months of the business’ operation. This builds on a similar model that has previously been tested in west Belfast under the SIF programme. Up to 35 individuals are expected

to be supported through this pathway in the course of the coming year.

- ii. **Employer Engagement:** there are around 15,000 businesses in Belfast across a range of sectors and varying from micro businesses to large-scale FDI companies. The majority of businesses are classified as micro and small businesses (employing less than 50 staff). Recent research with employers has identified that over 62% of businesses in Belfast have not engaged with mainstream employability and skills support, despite the range of support available and the number of organisations working in this field. Statutory partners recognise that there should be a more coherent approach to employer engagement and they have committed to undertaking work to look at options for how this might be achieved. This might include co-location of services; increased education and awareness-raising on the offer from respective partners or development of new services to meet gaps in the current provision. The scoping work on this model will be developed by Autumn 2019 with a view to exploring whether specific approaches might be piloted in particular sectors or specific geographical locations.
- iii. **Advice provision:** The Council – working with the Department for Communities – currently provides a support service using the advice sector across Belfast. One example of this support is through Advice Plus, led by North Belfast Advice Partnership. This project will trial a new relationship aimed at linking benefits and work-focused advice in a community setting. The Council will directly link its employment programmes such as Employment Academies into this network as a means of providing a direct route into employment for advice sector customers.

Collaboration with Department for the Economy (DfE)

- 3.7 To inform DfE's NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) action plan, officers are working with the Department to trial new approaches to support young people at risk of becoming NEET. At present, we are involved in two 'test and learn' pilots. Jointly funded with DfE, these pilots will support up to 40 young people at a high risk of becoming NEET many of whom will have some experience of the justice system and/or anti-social behaviour. Pilots are testing different approaches for engaging participants on a local area and a

city-wide basis with a focus on flexible interventions developed around a core mentoring offer to address the specific circumstances of the individual. The first pilot is a place based approach will be delivered in the Short Strand/Lower Newtownards Road area. The second approach is sectorally focused aimed at creating aspiration for young people to want to work in key sectors and supporting them to create a pathway to realise their ambition. Pilots are also engaging with a range of stakeholders including Youth Justice Agency, Education Welfare Officers, community organisations providing mental health, drug, and alcohol support. Pilot projects are expected to continue until March 2020 with a minimum of 20 participants progressing into positive destinations such as employment, further education and/or training. The outcome of these pilots will help to inform regional approaches to tackling the challenge around youth unemployment, specifically focused on NEETs.

Refining the work programme moving forward

- 3.8 In 2015, the Council developed a 10 year Employability and Skills Framework for the city with the purpose of creating an agreed vision and priority action areas for action by the Council and its partners. The ambitions contained within the framework formed the basis of the 'Working and Learning' pillar in the Belfast Agenda and the associated targets in the Agenda were drawn from the research undertaken as part of the framework development.
- 3.9 Over that period, the role of the Council in this area of work has changed considerably, with the majority of delivery focused on employer-led engagement to develop innovative solutions to help the economically inactive in particular to enter the workforce. While this work has had some significant success, it is important to ensure that the Council investment remains focused on those areas in which it can make an impact. In planning ahead, it is proposed that the Council engages external expertise to help focus its priority workplan for the coming 3-5 years, to be appointed through a competitive procurement process. This research will take account of the changing economic environment, a new approach to employability support by the Department for Communities (DfC), the development of the Belfast City Region Deal (BCRD), the wider ambitions for the city and a shared commitment to inclusive growth. It will help articulate the scale of interventions required to make a significant impact on the employment and skills levels in the city and will help identify some priority actions as a basis for engagement with our wider government and private sector partners, as well

as the associated budgetary implications of these investments. It will be an important tool for consideration as part of the medium-term financial planning approach of the Council.

- 3.10 Employability and skills is an underpinning pillar of the BRCD. Comprising of a range of projects spanning across infrastructure, regeneration, tourism, innovation and digital. Delivery and implementation of these projects is expected to result in up to 20,000 new and/or better employment opportunities. To identify the employment and skills implications of these projects, at both construction and operational phases, there is a need to better understand the skills requirements aligned to specific requirements for each project. Additionally there is a need to look at innovative approaches to delivering inclusive growth ensuring the benefits of the BRCD are spread across the city and wider region. To achieve this there is a need to access technical expertise to develop our understanding of skills needs, the scale of interventions required to make a tangible impact within our economy and developing a progressive approach to inclusive growth. The outcome of this work will be crucial in designing the employability and skills interventions required to support BRCD delivery. Commissioning of technical expertise will be undertaken through a competitive procurement process.

Equality and Good Relations Implications

- 3.11 Each of the activities outlined within this report is informed by statistical research, stakeholder engagement and complementary policies and strategies. New projects or service areas are equality screened and rural needs assessment completed. Consideration is given to equality and good relation impacts at the initial stages of project development. Officers will work closely with the Equality and Good Relations team on this activity.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.12 The financial resources to deliver the activities within this report will be resourced from the Economic Development 19/20 budget which has already been approved by this Committee. A breakdown of the budgetary costs is set out below:
- i. Enterprise Pathway pilot: the financial contribution from the Council to enhance start-up activity for the economically inactive is expected to be £100,000, with

the remaining costs expected to be provided through in-kind support from DfC and existing mainstream business start-up provision. This will support up to 35 potential start-ups;

- ii. Employer engagement pilot: the research and development work to support the development of a city-wide employer engagement service will require a financial contribution from the Council of up to a maximum of £20,000;
- iii. NEETs pilot: no financial contribution required from the Council – in-kind support to be provided through staff resources;
- iv. Revision of employability and skills framework to shape the work plan for the coming 3-5 years: maximum budget of £28,000 required for this work; and
- v. BRCD employability and skills technical expertise: maximum of budget of £25,000 as part of a wider partner funding package.”

After discussion, during which the Director of Development undertook to circulate to Members the Section 75 screenings for the various employment and skills development activities, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

Regenerating Places and Improving Infrastructure

City Centre Recovery and Revitalisation Programme

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the activity to date to support the City Centre Revitalisation Programme.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note:
 - i. the update on the City Revitalisation Programme, in terms of planned objectives and the key strands of activity to be taken forward; and
 - ii. that further updates will be brought back to the Committee as the overall programme and specific

proposals are further developed, in the context of the budget envelopes previously agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 22nd February 2019.

3.0 Main Report

Background

- 3.1 The major fire at the Bank Buildings on 28th August 2018 resulted in the forced closure of 22 businesses inside a cordoned off area. It also had a hugely negative impact on traders and businesses within the immediate vicinity of the cordon, with 95 businesses assisted through the Primark support fund. Located on the intersection of four key shopping streets – Royal Avenue, Donegall Place, Castle Street and Castle Place, the cordon effectively cut the city centre in half. To mitigate against this, the Council, working with a number of stakeholders put in place a significant city recovery programme aimed at assisting impacted traders and driving footfall into the city centre.

Impact of the City Recovery Programme Phase 1 Activity (pre-Christmas)

- 3.2 Since the immediate aftermath of the fire and in the run up to Christmas, the Council working with a range of stakeholders (including Bid One, BCCM, BCTC, Visit Belfast, DfC, and retailers) put in place a City Recovery Programme to increase footfall and encourage shoppers and visitors back into the city centre. This addressed issues around wayfinding and connectivity; physical and environmental improvements; large scale attractors and a supporting animation programme; all complimented by a bespoke marketing and communications campaign, #YourBelfast.

Key Success Measures of the City Recovery Programme

- 3.3 Following the implementation of the City Recovery Programme, feedback and evaluations of these activities identified a number of key success measures:
- i. ***Footfall***: The key issue following the fire was the localised reduction in footfall, especially Royal Avenue and Donegall Place. However, overall footfall in the city centre generally increased each month in 2018 compared to the same month in the previous year. December '18 saw an increase in footfall of 17% on December '17, with January '18 up 13% on the previous

year. Royal Avenue was up over 20% in the week prior Christmas compared to the previous year, and Fountain Street and Ann Street were both up over 60% in the same week;

- ii. **Retail trading / Sales:** Information provided by BCCM showed retail sales in Dec 18 vs Dec17 indicated a small net growth overall; 61% experienced sales that were the same or higher than Dec 17. The growth was largely driven by multiples whilst independent retailers experienced similar sales to last year. Overall, the hospitality sector performed better than retail; 79% experienced sales that were the same or higher than Dec 17;
- iii. **Animation programme:** Council commissioned Cathedral Quarter Trust to programme animation activity at key locations (particularly those worst affected areas) which involved approximately 75 local creative, arts and community cultural organisations attracting hundreds of additional visitors to the city centre;
- iv. **Independent Market Survey:** This highlighted that the additional animation programme, the large scale attractions and physical improvements encouraged visitors into the city centre, enhanced their stay and increased the likelihood of revisits;
- v. **Marketing and Communication Campaign:** A significant campaign of city marketing and communications activity was led by BCC, Visit Belfast and several other city partners. Overall, the campaign was successful in delivering increased year on year results over the 8 week period of the Christmas Campaign (ie +16% trips, +122% bed nights and +4% spend); and
- vi. **#Your Belfast Reward App:** Involving over 200 local businesses and over 75 different incentives, there were 5902 total unique installations of the app and 6334 total QR scans in a 3 week period.

City Revitalisation Programme

- 3.4 Following the successful delivery of the temporary City Recovery Programme immediately following the fire and in the period up to Christmas, the decision was taken to refocus this activity into a City Revitalisation programme, which would

align more closely with the existing strategies to enhance and develop the city centre (Belfast Agenda, Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy etc).

- 3.5 An update on the activity within the strands of work for the City Revitalisation Programme as previously agreed by Members is set out below.

Physical and Environmental Improvements

i. **Pop up Park**

- 3.6 Members will wish to note that a number of the physical and environmental improvements have already been deployed in the city centre. The temporary 'Pop Up' Play Park specifically designed for children to encourage exploratory play and learning in a safe and welcoming environment was opened in Castle Place by the Lord Mayor on 22 March. As noted in the cordon update below, the early reopening of Castle Junction has meant that the Pop Up Park has been removed to allow vehicle access to Castle Place. DfI control the roadway and had granted the Council a temporary licence until end May (or removal of cordon) for purposes of locating the pop up park. A separate report is being brought to this Committee on this issue.

ii. **Belfast in Bloom**

- 3.7 The enhanced Belfast in Bloom project is expected to begin roll out later this month adding greenery and colour to the city centre. With a feature piece planned at City Hall, it will also extend to enhance tubs, planters and hanging baskets in the city centre. The thematic displays will feature maritime related designs in early summer, progressing to music themed features later in the summer.

iii. **Deep Clean and Graffiti Renewal**

- 3.8 The deep clean and graffiti removal using a new hot water washer has begun in the priority city centre areas affected by the fire. A dedicated team has been put in place with work initially focusing on the removal of graffiti from hard surfaces and the underfoot cleaning (pavements/ granite) and the gable walls. Officers are continuing to explore options to address the graffiti on shutters, although there are some issues around liability which are being considered.

iv. Bank Square Canopy

- 3.9 Members will be aware in the months immediately following the fire, the area around Castle Street and Bank Square in particular faced a number of challenges including access and delivery requirements, ongoing building works and wayfinding to direct people to the area. This made animating and programming the space difficult. Despite these challenges, key environmental improvements were rolled out such as planters and lighting fixtures along with a number of successful animation events including the Cinema on the Square, Fire and Ice performances, and City of Music events.
- 3.10 The Castle Street area will continue to be significantly affected for the foreseeable future due to the continued closure to traffic of Castle Street and Bank Street, and the continued use of Bank Square as a delivery route for local traders. A key project for the City Revitalisation programme is exploring the creation of an outdoor covered space for retailer-led themed events and other animation activity in Bank Square. In order to test the viability of a permanent covered space, two one-month long pilots are planned over the summer and autumn (June/July and September/October) using a temporary canopy to encourage visitors and shoppers to spend time in the area. Officers are working with local retailers to develop a series of events which already includes a continuation of Council's successful Summer Music in the City Programme and plans by Bid One for a weekend of music during the Golf Open weekend. Engagement with local traders to develop and enhance this is currently underway. If the temporary pilot programme is successful, it is intended to bring formalised proposals for a longer term more permanent solution that involves the Council, DfC and traders.

v. City Dressing and Lighting Strategy

- 3.11 Following engagement with city stakeholders, a coherent City Dressing and Lighting Strategy is also currently under development alongside city partners, aimed at providing a coherent approach towards lighting and dressing throughout the city centre. It is intended that the strategy will provide the foundation on how specific lighting schemes can be brought forward on a phased basis, subject to future funding. To feed into the lighting element of the strategy, initial pilot projects have been identified at Castle Street and Castle Arcade and discussions are also underway with city partners in terms of an approach for enhanced Christmas lighting.

3.12 In addition, as part of the city dressing approach in the strategy, it is likely that proposals will include a thematic /seasonal approach to city dressing. To support this, new cordon designs are being developed and are being implemented in May 2019 to bring life to the static cordon around the Bank Building. It is anticipated that the draft City Dressing and Lighting Strategy will be complete later in the year and will be brought back to Committee for consideration by Members.

vi. Entries and Lanes Strategy

3.13 One of the key issues identified in the pre-Christmas Recovery Programme was the connectivity and permeability of the city centre and its impact on wayfinding around the city centre following the fire. To address this, and following research in other cities, there is an opportunity to support and enhance permeability via an Entries and Lanes Strategy which offers the opportunity to improve the connectivity, resilience, tourism, city character, marketing and alternative uses for the existing entries. A Four Phase strategy is proposed:

- i. Phase 1: Enhance existing entries between High Street and Ann Street (2019-20);
- ii. Phase 2: Enhance existing entries at Castle Arcade and Wineceller Entry (2019-20);
- iii. Phase 3: Enhanced Lanes at Church Lane, Wellington St and Callendar St (2020-21, subject to budget); and
- iv. Phase 4: Reopening Entries at High St Entry, Sugarhouse Entry and Fountain Mews (longer term, subject to budget)

3.14 The procurement for design consultants to support Phase 1 and 2 is currently underway and it is anticipated that a consultant will be appointed in early summer. Following a period of engagement and design scoping, it is hoped that the capital works for Phase 1 and 2 will begin late autumn and run until the end of the financial year. Preparatory work for Phases 3 and 4 can also be progressed but the capital works element will be subject to funding.

Animation/ Events and Programming

3.15 Members will be aware that as part of the Recovery Programme, there was a significant animation programme in the lead up to Christmas. Going forward in the City

Revitalisation Programme, it is proposed that the focus will be on existing activity, scaling up investment and focusing on affected areas while creating a sense of 'experience' through 'must see' events that are unique to the city centre.

3.16 Activities that have been enhanced to date include:

- i. Extending the Festival of Fools event beyond Cathedral Quarter into the city centre, link to the Marathon and other bank holiday activity;
- ii. Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival: expansion of the programme for the 20th year of the event to include a number of high profile performances; and
- iii. Expansion of the Maritime Festival: there is a range of activities focused on the quays and Titanic Quarter area. However the event is also being expanded to include other locations such as St George's Market

3.17 Other proposals planned going forward include:

- i. 148th Open Golf: focal point of activity at City Hall to incorporate crazy golf, golf simulators and family-friendly golf-themed activities. Also exploring potential for a 'music hub' at Bank Square from mid-July to mid-August, incorporating a range of musical performances, in partnership with the businesses in the area;
- ii. 'Taste the Island' – exploring opportunities to tie into this Tourism Ireland campaign showcasing local food and drink produce as well as the best of local restaurants; and
- iii. Support for an expanded 'Culture Night' to become a 'Culture Weekend' – this is scheduled for weekend of 20-21 September. The Friday event will focus on the Cathedral Quarter area while the Saturday event will involve the retail and hospitality core in the City centre.

Marketing and Communications

- 3.18 In response to the feedback received through our regular stakeholder engagement with retailers and key city partners, and along with research which identified a decline in the day trip market, Visit Belfast have been commissioned to work with city stakeholders and Council to develop a new 'Make it Belfast' advertising campaign to support the City**

Revitalisation Programme. Over the coming months, the campaign will advertise the city online, on the radio, in the press and on outdoor channels with a focus on families, young/young at heart to:

- i. Re-engage local consumer interest and inspire visits through positive messages;**
- ii. Uplift image and attractiveness of Belfast city centre as a premier retail day trip destination;**
- iii. Maximise campaign reach and penetration to targeted segmented audience;**
- iv. Address perceptions and local visiting patterns; and**
- v. Promote positive Belfast experiences, great value and access.**

3.19 The advertisements feature people who work in our shops, restaurants and bars and focuses on the city's character and energy, highlighting that a visit to the city - be it for shopping, eating or socialising - is always unique. Stakeholders identified that May and August were the most optimum times for the campaign to run taking into consideration other activities and plans they had in between these times. A highly visible promotional mix of ambient, bus T-sides, selected adshels, outdoor 48 sheets, radio, digital, video, social and national and local press will be used throughout the campaign to promote and inform the target audience. Where appropriate, Council will uplift the campaign via our existing external communication channels.

3.20 'Make it Belfast' campaign went live on Monday 13 May with radio advertising, followed by outdoor, digital and press advertising from w/c 20 May for the next six weeks. Social media will run throughout May up to the end of August to ensure an 'always on' approach to the campaign. It is planned that there will be an additional burst of advertising in late July which will continue up to the end of August with further radio, outdoor, regional press, digital and programmatic display and film advertising. Supporting material including a '*Make it Belfast*' campaign tool-kit is under development for use by all stakeholders to further strengthen and add value to the campaign.

Update on the Cordon

- 3.21 As Members will be aware, in addition to the Castle Place walkway, two further walkways opened at the end of February and March this year, which have increased access around the cordon from Castle Street, via Fountain Street to Donegall Place. This access enabled a number of closed businesses to reopen in recent weeks including Zara, Abacus Beads and most recently Tesco which reopened on Monday 20th May. All business now have access to their premises and only one business remains closed.
- 3.22 The façade retention schemes were complete by the end of April, with the cordon at Castle Junction reduced earlier than anticipated at the end of May. This allowed a wider opening at Castle Junction to open on 23 May which allows single lane traffic between Royal Avenue and Donegall Place. Translink Metro Services were able to resume on the morning of 23rd May as well. Further details on the new city centre access arrangements and the Castle Place traffic management plan following the latest reduction of the cordon have been circulated to Members.

City Currency

- 3.23 As announced on 8th May, the pilot of the Belfast Coin initiative was launched. Following the pilot, Belfast is set to introduce its own city currency via an app later this year as a result of a successful application by the Council to be part of a global challenge through the 100 Resilient Cities network. Belfast Coin will be an incentive-based digital currency aimed at rewarding positive actions by residents, as well as encouraging economic growth and helping to achieve environmental goals while working alongside other global cities to learn from each other about urban problem solving and sharing best practice. The pilot will see Council work with a range of partners and stakeholders across the city to allow the currency to be used as payment in shops, restaurants and other business in response to shopping local, recycling, volunteering and taking part in civic activities.

Community Safety within City Centre

- 3.24 Council officers have been proactively working with key city centre partners, including BIDs, DFC, DOJ, BCCM, Cathedral Quarter Trust, Linen Quarter and retailers, to explore and identify how we can create an enhanced sense of safety within the city centre. This has resulted in co-funding being secured

from DoJ, Cathedral Quarter and Linen Quarter and BIDs for two new beat officers.

Footfall Figures

- 3.25 There continues to be ongoing challenges around footfall in the city centre. In April, footfall marginally improved in the city centre as a whole, up 0.7% on the previous year to date. However, Royal Avenue continues to be impacted by reduced footfall compared to the same month in the previous year (-32.3% on Apr 2018) and Donegall Place was also down in April compared to the previous year (-4.1%). Nearly all areas (except Fountain Street) saw an improvement compared to the footfall figures reported in March, though this in part will be as a result of the Easter holidays in April. Across NI, footfall is up 0.8% on the year to date, and up across the UK as a whole by 0.2%.

City Centre Regeneration Taskforce

- 3.26 Members may wish to note that all the activity related to the City Revitalisation Programme noted above is set within the context of a wider regeneration strategy and action plan for the city centre and the Belfast City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy forms the basis of this. It contains a number of policies, projects and special action areas aimed at driving the regeneration of the city centre whilst ensuring connections to adjoining communities. As Members are aware, in the aftermath of the Bank Buildings fire a City Centre Regeneration Task Force was established jointly chaired by the Head of the Civil Service and the Council's Chief Executive, which aims to support a collaborative public sector response to drive and resource the city centre revitalisation efforts in the long-term.
- 3.27 The priority areas of focus emerging from the City Centre Joint Regeneration Taskforce are set out below, which mirror the recurrent themes identified by businesses and the representative organisations within the City:
- i. City Resilience – a medium to long term city centre recovery plan involving various stakeholders and the continued need to drive forward and support the retail, office, tourist and city centre living product;
 - ii. Re-imagining and Diversification – recognising the need to diversify the city centre, including provision of family centric activities, enhanced tourist and cultural

offering, city centre living, enhancing the evening economy etc.; and

- iii. **Infrastructure and Connectivity** – enhance public realm and open space ensure permeability and connections through the city, transport and car parking issues etc.

- 3.28 The objectives of the emerging City Revitalisation Programme seeks to take account and align with these priority areas of focus.

Finance and Resources Implications

- 3.29 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 22nd February 2019, followed by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 6th March, considered and approved a report setting out an overview of the broad proposals for the City Revitalisation Programme and associated budget allocations across the identified strands of activity totalling £2.505m. The key strands detailed and for which updates are provided in this report are funded from within the overall budget noted above.

Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.30 None associated with this report.”

During discussion, a Member reminded the Committee that the Council had, in 2018, agreed not to designate the Belfast district or the City centre as a ‘Holiday Resort’, which would have allowed larger shops to extend their trading hours on up to eighteen Sundays per year. That decision had been based primarily on the impact which the designation would have upon small independent traders and shop workers. She explained that there now existed, in light of the significant work which had been undertaken in recent months to revitalise the City centre, an ideal opportunity to designate that area as a ‘Holiday Resort’ and suggested that consideration be given to implementing it initially on a one-year trial basis.

A further Member raised concerns around an investor in a company which the Council was working with as part of the City centre revitalisation programme. She claimed that the investor had received a letter from the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner in respect of its activities in the occupied territories of Israel/Palestine.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations contained within the report and:

- i. agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting setting out the Terms of Reference to progress proposals for designating the City centre as a ‘Holiday Resort’, taking into account issues beyond

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

opening hours and outlining the extent of the associated consultation process;

- ii. agreed that the Legal Services Section review in advance of its next meeting the aforementioned letter which had been issued by the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner and advise of any potential implications for the Council; and
- iii. noted that Council officers would, upon request, brief Political Parties on the wider aspects of the City Centre Recovery and Revitalisation Programme, with a view to informing future proposals, and that Members would have an opportunity to raise this and other issues in a series of workshops which were planned for the coming year around future priorities for the Committee.

Castle Place and Pedestrianisation

The Director of City Regeneration and Development submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- i. update Members on the removal of the Castle Place Pop Up Park;
- ii. update Members on the emerging debate around city centre pedestrianisation and proposed next steps; and
- iii. highlight Motions brought forward by Members in relation to pedestrianisation; problem parking and traffic calming.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- i. note the update on the Castle Place pop up park and the public response to its subsequent removal;
- ii. note the ambition of the City, as set out in the Belfast Agenda, to promote sustainable forms of transport including walking and cycling;
- iii. note the ambition of the Council, as set out in the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy, to create a green, walkable, cyclable City centre;

- iv. note that the Department for Infrastructure is currently drafting the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Strategy, which will set the direction for transportation policy for the city, and will be a key stakeholder in bringing forward any discussions regarding the future use of the city infrastructure;
- v. agree that the Council commission research to examine models of pedestrianisation and other initiatives in a way which facilitates the development of the city centre, enabling both pedestrian enjoyment and public transport access;
- vi. note the ongoing engagement with wider civic and statutory partners to explore the issues of accessibility and use of the City centre;
- vii. note that options are currently being considered for the provision of further temporary pop up parks in the city centre in the short-term and at the same time consideration of options for permanent green space, with a further report brought back to Committee in the near future; and
- viii. agree to invite relevant officials from DfI to discuss current Motions raised by Council.

3.0 Main Report

Background

- 3.1 In the aftermath of the fire at the Bank Buildings, Castle Junction and the bottom of Castle Street were closed to both vehicular and pedestrian traffic and a number of interventions took place in the city centre to address the drop in footfall, support the economic recovery, animate spaces and create a buzz in the lead up to Christmas. This work was brought forward under the Revitalisation Programme as part of a multi-agency approach, led by Council but involved a number of stakeholders including retailers; BCCM, Chamber, DfC, DfI, Visit Belfast, the BIDS, Cathedral Quarter Trust and other cultural organisations. These temporary measures were approved in the October SP&R Committee meeting and updated and approved through CG&R committee in subsequent meetings on 7th November and 5th December 2018 and 9th January, 13th February, 6th March and 3rd April 2019.

- 3.2 The Department for Infrastructure is the statutory authority for the provision of road infrastructure and public transportation. In order to facilitate the Revitalisation Programme the department granted licences to the Council to occupy specific areas on Donegall Place, Castle Place and Royal Avenue to install temporary environmental improvements, street furniture and attractions and to utilise the space for animation purposes. The licence for these areas were granted for a period from November 2018 until end of May 2019, or until such time as the cordon was sufficiently reduced to enable the reintroduction of the public transportation network. Pre-Christmas these areas were used to facilitate environmental improvements and family fun attractions including astro-turf and landscaping, seating, food markets, a snow slide and children's funfair area.

Castle Place Pop Up Park

- 3.3 Post-Christmas, as part of the Phase 2 Revitalisation programme the space at Castle Place was re-designed as a children's pop up play area that utilised the existing seating and planters. As part of the Phase 2 works, the park was brought forward on the basis that it was a temporary feature, in line with the timeline for the work on the Bank Buildings.
- 3.4 The design introduced elements of urban play, i.e. colourful soft mounds, animal sculptures and topiary, and a pirate boat. A bespoke sculpture of the iconic Bank Buildings clock was created for the site to give a focal point. The park was officially launched open on the 22nd March with a focus on providing fun and friendly space within the city centre and to test concepts for green urban play spaces within the city centre environment.
- 3.5 A programme of events, developed and delivered by Cathedral Quarter Trust, animated the area and drew significant crowds to activities such as music events, Festival of Fools, specific activities aimed at children and families, and provided a location for the Chinese New Year parade and three decorated 'Love Benches' for Valentines week.
- 3.6 As a part of the Festival of Fools programme a survey was carried out of 265 attendees at the performances in Castle Place and 72% ranked the space as excellent and 25% as good. There were also numerous articles in newspapers and local media: Belfast Telegraph, Daily Mirror, 4ni.co.uk, The Nolan Show and the Irish News. A BBC Newslines feature on the 1st May 2019 outlined the positive effects of the park on the city centre users but also highlighted that some

traders, businesses and services raised some concerns around access to the city centre.

- 3.7** Following confirmation of an accelerated programme from Primark on the removal of the Castle Place structural cordon the park was removed in the week commencing 6th May to enable the opening of the Castle Place junction to traffic in accordance with the licence granted by DfI. This was also in line with the updates provided to CG&R Committee on the temporary nature of the interventions.
- 3.8** The removal of the pop-up park was complete by 10th May to enable DfI to install the civil engineering works to facilitate the new junction arrangement through Castle Place. The new junction arrangement is dictated by the working space required to allow for the structural retention system to the historic Bank Buildings façade and to provide adequate working space for the remedial works to restore this landmark building. The new, constrained junction alignment was opened on 23rd May and provides for southbound bus and delivery access from Royal Avenue into Donegall Place and Castle Place, and normal service through Castle Place and Donegall Place. This junction arrangement will be in place until such time as the permanent structural framework can support the existing façade and the temporary container based façade retention can be removed. It should be noted that northbound services will continue to operate out of temporary bus stop locations on North Street.
- 3.9** The fire and cordon had a significant impact on businesses in the area, with 22 businesses having to close or relocate and others, especially to the north and west of the cordon, resulting in reduced trade and footfall in certain areas. Although the walkway through the cordon was opened on 3 December 2018, there was significant support from many businesses/retailers that the cordon should be reduced as soon as possible and vehicular access and bus services resumed.
- 3.10** Members should note that options are currently being considered for the provision of further temporary pop up parks in the city centre in the short-term whilst, at the same time, exploring options for more permanent green space and play space. A further report will be brought back to Committee on this in the near future.
- 3.11** Prior to the removal of the park Council held Facebook and Twitter polls that asked, 'Is this the type of project you'd like more of in #YourBelfast?' There were 1000 responses on to

the Twitter poll, 91% in favour and 9% not in favour. Council's initial Tweet reached over 23,000 people and engaged with 1,000 users. The Facebook poll had 846 votes with 90% support and 10% negative, reached almost 17,000 people, and engaged just over 1,700 people (reactions, comments, shares, post clicks).

- 3.12 NI Greenways has also petitioned Belfast City Council, DfI and Translink through the Change.org website on the basis that *'Belfast loves its new pedestrian core and play streets—DON'T hand it all back to traffic'* and to date there are over 3,400 signatures in support of the petition.

Pedestrianisation

- 3.13 A Notice of Motion was brought to the Full Council meeting on the 21st of May by Councillor Lyons and seconded by Councillor McKeown and was referred, without discussion, to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee. The Notice of Motion stated that:

'This Council notes the challenges created by the fire in Bank Buildings and the ongoing Council led effort to stimulate economic activity in the area using street animation, pop up play parks and other incentives. The Council also notes that the redevelopment of our city centre as a shared and mixed use space offers traders, residents and visitors a range of economic, social and cultural opportunities. Noting the Department for Infrastructure's public consultation on the future use of the streets around Castle Place and Donegall Place, the Council calls for the pedestrianisation of this area'

- 3.14 In response to the reopening of Castle Junction DfI released a press statement on 10th May stating that *'While the plan is to restore access now, the re-opening of Castle Place has started a wider debate about how we use our City Centre and make it an attractive, safe and accessible environment as possible for everyone'*. This direction is reflected in the Departments proposed Belfast Metropolitan Transport Strategy (BMTS) which will be progressed when Ministers are back in place. The BMTS and the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan will form the policy that could enable the modal shift and rebalancing of road space in the city centre. DfI also pointed out that the rerouting of metro services away from Castle Place created difficulties for some groups using public transport to access the city centre and created congestion in other parts of the city.

- 3.15 In its press statement DfI also advised that *'the Department plans to open discussions with wider partners to explore how we should best proceed to ensure Belfast City Centre thrives through a greater focus on place and public transport accessibility.'*
- 3.16 As the statutory authority DfI will be critical to all discussions going forward to ensure alignment with the emerging work on the BMTS, and there has been ongoing engagement between the Council, DfI and DfC on this issue and how the city centre can best function for all users. This engagement will continue and widen out over the coming months with updates to be provided to Members through subsequent committee meetings.
- 3.17 It should be noted that pedestrianisation proposals for the city centre would have an impact on proposed and planned infrastructure projects for the city, including Belfast Rapid Transport Phase 2, which currently forms a part of the Belfast Region City Deal, and Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 3. This scheme currently has planning permission, and DfC, supported by Council, have advocated that this scheme be prioritised for capital investment. The approved Streets Ahead 3 scheme allows for the provision of public transportation, blue badge holders and business deliveries (within a permitted delivery period of 6pm – 11am) only to access Royal Avenue.
- 3.18 A change in approach would result in the need for a re-design of the Streets Ahead scheme and a delay in the implementation of Streets Ahead Phase 3. Any re-design would require further engagement and consultation, and a re-application for planning permission. This would require agreement on the role and route for public transportation through the city centre.
- 3.19 This would also require input from DfI, retailers /businesses and their representative bodies, Translink, Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce and people who live, work and use Belfast. There is a recognition that the temporary arrangements following the Bank Buildings fire were unsuitable for many and access to buses and future designs and changes must take in account people with different needs. This would involve engagement with people with disabilities, including but not limited to wheelchair users, people with visual impairments, blind and partially sighted people.
- 3.20 The Belfast Agenda outlines the City's ambition to promote the development of sustainable transport. This includes

promoting walking and cycling. The support, and concept, of pedestrianising areas in the city reflects one of the key policies in the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS), which seeks to create a green, walkable, cycleable city centre. It specifically references the lack of green space and tree-lined streets, and identifies the need for rebalancing the scales between tarmac and soft landscaping and recognises that there is no provision for children in the city centre.

- 3.21** In considering the effects and impacts of how pedestrianisation works, and how Belfast city centre could provide a modern and sustainable approach to infrastructure provision and connectivity, it is worth looking at measures and initiatives that make successful city centres elsewhere in the context of all users. This would also inform the debate on how Belfast could address some of the current issues, including ensuring a balance between business requirements, transportation, pedestrianisation and high-quality public space and taking into account the specific needs of different users of the city centre.
- 3.22** Much work has been done in other cities on the options around the practice of pedestrianisation. This has focused on the needs of both the pedestrian and other potential road users. Successful examples of pedestrianised or part pedestrianised streets have allowed various road users to share the same space in differing configurations. The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation has suggested looking at shared space under the following headings:
- i.** ‘Pedestrian prioritised streets’ – where those on foot ‘feel that they can move freely anywhere, and where drivers should feel they are a guest’.
 - ii.** ‘Informal streets’ – where formal traffic controls such as signs, markings and signals are either absent or reduced. There is a footway and carriageway, ‘but the differentiation between them is typically less than in a conventional street’.
 - iii.** ‘Enhanced streets’ – where the public realm has improved and where restrictions on pedestrian movement – such as guardrails – have been removed, but where conventional traffic controls largely remain.
- 3.23** It is recommended the Council commission research which examines models of pedestrianisation and other initiatives in a way that facilitates the development of the city centre enabling both pedestrian enjoyment and public transport

access. This is particularly appropriate when considering the existing and developing Belfast Rapid Transit – Glider.

Notices of Motion

3.24 DfI will be presenting the City Growth and Regeneration Committee with the Annual Spring Report (date to be confirmed) and it is proposed that the Committee invite the relevant officials from DfI to address the following issues raised through Council by Members:

- The Motion raised by Council Lyons on the 21st May (as outlined above) on the pedestrianisation of the City centre and the proposed consultation to address the recent debates;
- The following Motion raised by Councillor Dorrian on 1st February, 2019 on Problem Parking:

'This Council recognises the concerns of many communities across Belfast in respect to 'problem parking' in their neighbourhoods, primarily during day time work hours, and recognises the need for further substantive engagement to address and resolve this issue. To date, strategies and campaigns have had minimal impact in solving these communities' difficulties. In mind of ambitious investment and expansion plans contained in the Belfast Agenda, the Council calls for immediate, co-ordinated action to improve parking measures and notes the lack of enforcement action to date with respect to bus and cycle lanes.

This motion also reaffirms the Council's commitment to full implementation of its car parking strategy, delivering proper parking infrastructure and taking appropriate action against those who show daily disregard for local communities.'

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the motion; and agreed that there would be engagement with those communities which bounded the city centre, in conjunction with the Department for Infrastructure, to discuss the issues within the motion'

- The following Motion raised by Councillor McAteer on 4th February 2019 on Traffic Calming:

'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 discuss reviewing the criteria.'

4.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 There are no negative Equality, Good Relation or Rural Needs implications at this point. The Council's Equality and Diversity Officer will be consulted during any future consultation process and any proposed approach will be subject to the Council's screening requirements to ensure that Equality and Good Relations implications and Rural Needs are fully considered.

5.0 Resource Implications

5.1 The costs for Phase 1 and Phase 2 interventions were met by the City Revitalisation budget. The proposed research up to £30k will be covered from within current department budgets."

The Director of City Regeneration and Development provided an overview of the report and confirmed that discussions which had taken place on the previous day with the Department for Communities and the Department for Infrastructure around the future development and use of the City Centre had been constructive, with all parties keen to explore how the City centre could best function for all users.

In terms of recommendation (v) within the report, it was pointed out that the Council, the Department for Communities and the Department for Infrastructure had agreed to jointly commission a study to examine how the City centre could develop in a way that was accessible and welcoming for all. The study would include an examination of models of pedestrianisation and other initiatives, which would facilitate the development of the City centre, enabling both pedestrian enjoyment and sustainable access.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations, including the amendment to recommendation (v).

Positioning Belfast to Compete

Update on International Relations

The Director of Development submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for a number of activities including:

- i. **Friendship Four Ice Hockey initiative: this project was one of the earliest activities that came about through the Belfast-Boston Sister City agreement. The initiative is organised by The Odyssey Trust, who have requested financial support of £47,500 from the Council for this calendar year, out of a total project cost of around £250,000;**
- ii. **facilitating an Inward Visit, including a welcome reception for the New York State Legislators from 21st-23rd September 2019, at a maximum cost of £2,000;**
- iii. **attendance by the Chair of Committee (or nominee) plus one officer at the EUROCITIES annual conference on 20-22 November 2019 in Prague, at a maximum cost of £2,000; and**
- iv. **participation by the Director of Economic Development (or his nominee) in an Invest NI-led business and investment mission to Israel at the end of July 2019, at a cost not to exceed £2,500.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- i. **note the anticipated outputs of the Friendship Four event and approve the funding request of £47,500 for the current financial year;**
- ii. **approve the facilitation and cost of welcoming the New York State Legislators from 21st-23rd September 2019 at a maximum cost of £2,000;**
- iii. **approve the attendance of the Chair (or her nominee), plus one officer, at the EUROCITIES annual conference**

in Prague from 20th till 22nd November 2019, at a cost not exceeding £2,000;

- iv. approve the participation of the Director of Economic Development (or his nominee) in an Invest NI-led business and investment mission to Israel at the end of July 2019, at a cost not exceeding £1,500; and
- v. approve the participation of the Chair of the Committee and the Director of Economic Development (or their nominees), plus one additional officer, on the upcoming Sister Cities business missions to Boston, Nashville and Shenyang.

All elements will be resourced from within the EU/International Unit and the Economic Development budgets which have already been approved by this Committee.

3.0 Main Report

Friendship Four

- 3.1 The Friendship Four tournament was one of the first major outputs of the Belfast-Boston Sister City agreement signed in 2014. This competition remains the first and only National Collegiate Athletic Association of the USA (NCAA) Division 1 hockey tournament to be held outside of the United States. Taking place over the Thanksgiving period, four colleges, alumni and family supporters travel to Belfast for a week. The games are televised live in the United States and Canada with the tournament also garnering a significant following on social media platforms locally, nationally and internationally.
- 3.2 In addition to the matches, the tournament encompasses a number of satellite events. The College students undertake visits to local schools whereby young people are able to learn about the American education system and scholarship opportunities and the visiting students are immersed in the local culture. The tournament also features a 'Festival of STEM' hosted by W5. W5 is the interactive science and discovery centre located managed by the Odyssey Trust and the STEM Ambassador Hub for Northern Ireland. The emphasis of the Festival of STEM programme is to promote these subjects across the curriculum, the involvement of women in sport and career opportunities within these disciplines
- 3.3 Since the first tournament in 2014, the Friendship Four programme has diversified and entered into new areas of

activity. In 2018/19, two new initiatives were delivered as part of the initiative. The inaugural women's competition was held in January 2019 and a business, education and tourism showcase promoted the local creativity and innovation across these sectors to those visiting the city as part of the event.

- 3.4** The Odyssey Trust has developed a business plan for the three year period 2019-2021. It identifies an annual visitor spend in the region of £320,000 by event participants. It also notes that the live television coverage of the event will reach more than 150million households. Plans are well advanced for the 2019 event. Teams confirmed as participating include Colgate (NY), Northeastern, Princeton (NJ) and New Hampshire. Teams proposed for the 2020 and 2021 competitions include Boston College, Michigan, Quinnipiac, Harvard, UMass Lowell, Vermont, Providence, Notre Dame and Clarkson.
- 3.5** Belfast City Council has been a principal funder of this event since its inception, alongside the Department for Communities (DfC), Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Invest NI, The US Consulate and the Odyssey Trust. Private sector income is levered through corporate sponsorship and ticket sales. In terms of alignment with Belfast Agenda targets, the proposed event supports a number of the key priorities including:
- i.** increasing the number of bednights, particularly those from out of state visitors; and
 - ii.** promoting and positioning the city to compete by building on the sports programme and creating a strong marketing and branding piece, focusing on the city's economic and tourism strengths.
- 3.6** Given the significant reliance on public support for the event, the Odyssey Trust is currently in the process of trying to secure the funding from the partners identified above. If the Committee agrees to provide the amount of funding requested from Belfast City Council, officers will develop a detailed Legal Agreement with key performance indicators for the event and the release of funding will be subject to the organiser's ability to meet those targets.

EUROCITIES Annual Conference – 20 - 22 November 2019, Prague

- 3.7** Members will be aware that Belfast has been a member of the EUROCITIES network for 24 years. EUROCITIES is a network

of more than 140 major European cities, made up of the elected local and municipal governments of major European cities. The network is structured through the thematic fora of Culture, Social Affairs, Knowledge Society and Environment and each forum has a number of working groups. Belfast has participated in a number of the groups, based on particular areas of need or interest to the council and the city at that time. We have also shared learning on a range of topics and has availed of the network to engage with the key EU institutions in order to influence policy.

- 3.8 Members will be aware that, in March 2019, this Committee agreed to the council's continued participation in the network. The annual conference enables cities to review and input into the future work plans, elect the Executive committee and discuss urban issues and challenges of specific interest. The theme for the 2019 conference is 'City Transformation' with pertinent issues on the agenda such as establishing new purposes for vacant historic buildings, addressing population decline in urban centres and greening the city.
- 3.9 In order to maintain access to the network and to ensure that Belfast retains the insight and high-level contacts in Brussels and other cities, it is proposed that the Committee Chair (or her nominee) plus one officer attends this conference.

New York State Legislators Visit to Belfast, 21-23 September 2019

- 3.10 The Council has received a request from the Assembly Member and President of the American Irish Legislators Society of New York State, Mr Michael Cusick, to host a delegation of up to 50 members from 21-23 September 2019.
- 3.11 The delegation will be undertaking a mission to Ireland from 18th till 27th September, and will be in Belfast for a series of economic, political and community meetings.
- 3.12 The aim of their visit is to demonstrate continued US commitment to advancing investment and transatlantic partnerships as well as continued interest in the NI Peace Process. The delegation last visited NI in 2015 and Belfast City Council hosted the group and facilitated relevant meetings and briefings at this time.
- 3.13 Members are requested to provide:
- i. a welcome and networking reception with key stakeholders; and

- ii. a formal business meeting with Belfast City Council members and officers to discuss how to enhance cooperation between Belfast and the State of New York.
- 3.14 In order to re-invigorate business, academic and cultural/tourism links with the state of New York using the influence of the Society, it is proposed that the Committee agrees to the above requests at a cost not to exceed £2,000.

Business and Investment Mission to Israel

- 3.15 Members will be aware that the Council has been working closely with Invest NI and Catalyst Inc to explore ways of bringing forward collaborative initiatives to support local businesses to become more competitive. This includes exploring new markets for their products and services and new avenues to lever investment. As part of these negotiations, Invest NI is working on an investment and business mission to the Israel. The trip will take place on the week commencing 29 July, 2019 and will also involve Catalyst Inc. The aim of the mission is to facilitate access to investment and new market opportunities for 5 Belfast based businesses. By taking part in the visit, it is anticipated that the Council will get greater insight into the potential for new business and investment opportunities in this location in order to inform our future work programme.

Business Missions to Nashville, Boston and Shenyang

- 3.16 Members will be aware of a previous report in March when approval was given to Belfast City Council to undertake three business missions to our Sister Cities, Nashville, Boston and Shenyang.
- 3.17 Plans are now well underway to recruit companies and develop itineraries for these visits. In order to ensure resources to deliver the civic business and logistical elements of each programme, Members are asked to approve the participation of the Chair of Committee and the Director of Economic Development (or nominees) as well as another officer.
- 3.18 The budgets for each of these visits have already been approved by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee. Additional details on the respective visit programmes will be brought back to future meetings of the committee once available.

Equality and Good Relations Implications

3.19 There are no direct Equality or Good Relations implications associated with these activities.

3.20 **Financial and Resource Implications**

The financial and resource implications are as follows:

- i. up to £47,500 for the Friendship Four tournament in November 2019, subject to a legal agreement and subject to the organisers meeting agreed objectives;
- ii. a maximum cost of £2,000 for welcoming the New York State Legislators from 21st - 23rd September;
- iii. an estimated maximum cost of £2,000 for attending the EUROCITIES annual conference;
- iv. the costs associated with attendance at the business and investment mission visit to Middle East will not exceed £1,500; and
- v. the costs associated with participation in the future business missions to Boston, Shenyang and Nashville have already been approved by this Committee.

All budgetary allocations have been set aside within the EU & International or the Economic Development Unit budgets which have already been approved by this Committee.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted recommendations (i), (ii) (iii) and (v), as set out within the report. In terms of recommendation (iv), it was

Moved by Councillor Garrett,
Seconded by Councillor Lyons,

That the Committee agrees that the Director of Economic Development (or his nominee) not participate in the trade mission to Israel and agrees further that the £1,500 which had been set aside for that mission be used, in light of the ongoing issues around Brexit, to facilitate the attendance at the EUROCITIES Annual Conference of the Deputy Chair (or her nominee).

On a recorded vote, eleven Members voted for the proposal and five against, with one ‘no vote’ and it was declared carried.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

For 11	Against 5	No Vote 1
Councillors S. Baker, Beattie, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Hargey, Heading, Lyons, Murphy, O'Hara and Whyte	Alderman Spence and Councillors Brooks, Howard, T. Kelly and Nicholl	Councillor Harvey

Galway 2020 Music Collaboration Project

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on discussions with Galway 2020 on delivering an international music collaboration project, as part of its European Capital of Culture programme.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is requested to note the contents of this report and approve an investment of £100,000 over two financial years in this project, subject to fundraising targets being reached.

3.0 Main Report

Background

3.1 In June 2018, the Committee granted permission for officers to develop options for a collaboration with Galway 2020, as part of Galway holding the European Capital of Culture designation in that year.

3.2 The background to this proposal is the work undertaken as part of Belfast's bid to become European Capital of Culture. This work revealed the opportunity for Belfast to increase local engagement in culture as well as maximising the role of culture in supporting Belfast as a global city through:

- i. Increasing cohesion and permeability**
- ii. Building identity and confidence**
- iii. Attracting investment and visitors**
- iv. Retaining talent**

- 3.3** In March 2019, the City Growth and Regeneration Committee approved the draft ten-year cultural strategy, *A City Imagining*, to go out to public consultation. This document proposes 16 key strategic priorities across 4 thematic areas. Following completion of the public consultation, a revised strategy will be presented to this Committee in August 2019 for consideration.
- 3.4** A number of the proposed strategic priorities across all the themes will be supported by this international collaboration project with Galway 2020, including:
- i. protecting and promoting cultural heritage in all its dimensions, both tangible and intangible including the plurality of the city's cultural narratives;
 - ii. supporting high quality cultural events that are accessible, diverse and inclusive;
 - iii. investing in a stronger and more sustainable cultural sector by supporting artists and producers to work beyond boundaries;
 - iv. strengthening our city, regional and international cultural networks; and
 - v. growing our sustainable cultural tourism product
- 3.5** In addition to the 16 priorities, the draft strategy also presents four major strategic projects over the ten year period including:
- i. A new approach to events and festivals in the city
 - ii. Plans for a year-long programme of cultural activity provisionally proposed for 2023
 - iii. A bid for UNESCO City of Music designation in 2021
 - iv. A new visitor attraction, including the Belfast Story, as part of the Belfast Region City Deal
- 3.6** The success of all of these projects is dependent of the ability of the city to develop international cultural links and deliver projects of quality and scale. There is also a specific focus on music building on our existing strengths as a city and following extensive research and the decision by Council to pursue the UNESCO designation for music.
- 3.7** Key Issues
- Proposed project
- Following detailed discussions with the Galway 2020 team, a proposal has emerged that focuses on exploring the music

links and heritage between the two cities and North America through our existing Sister Cities programme with Nashville and Boston.

3.8 The project would have three keys strands:

- i. a series of specially commissioned concerts to be performed in Belfast, Galway, Nashville and Boston;**
- ii. a touring exhibition potentially in partnership with Country Music and Folk Music Hall of Fame; and**
- iii. an artist exchange programme and showcase to support emerging artists**

3.9 At the core of the project will be a series of signature concerts and related ancillary engagement programmes which trace the journey of Irish and Scots-Irish people to North America and, in particular, the impact of their music on American culture. Featuring leading musicians from both sides of the Atlantic, this will be a specially curated project with concerts in Galway, Belfast and participating US cities.

3.10 Through the various waves of emigration to America, local cultural heritage has had a profound and lasting influence on American music in particular. The mix of Irish and Scottish music introduced American musicians to new forms of music and storytelling styles. However, this was not an entirely one sided relationship as the adoption of African American instruments such as the banjo into traditional Celtic music illustrates.

3.11 A new repertoire developed from these immigrant experiences; railroad songs, work songs, songs of love, comic songs and songs of home. Many variations of these songs entered the mainstream of American folk song and are still a key influence on what we now call Americana music, incorporating elements of country, roots, rock, folk and bluegrass.

3.12 The proposal would be to celebrate these cultural connections through a concert format that will feature several group and individual performances linked by a specially commissioned script .

3.13 Outputs

The proposed outputs of the projects are as follows:

- i. 4 concerts**
- ii. A curated touring exhibition including content from all 4 cities**

- iii. Artist-in-residence/ showcase opportunities to support local artists
- iv. Exchange programmes to facilitate and promote research and collaborative opportunities
- v. Merchandising such as CD, DVD etc
- vi. US/UK/Irish/European broadcasting opportunities including documentary and concert performances
- vii. Radio concert format

3.14 Outcomes

- i. Local civic engagement focussing on the music dimension of the Belfast Story with resulting exhibition contributing to the development of the new visitor attraction
- ii. Increased international profile including return on investment through media coverage
- iii. Support for UNESCO bid including number of international partnerships
- iv. Direct economic impact through bed nights and visitor spend
- v. Support and showcasing of local emerging talent

3.15 Timescale

- i. July - September 2019: funding commitments confirmed
- ii. September - October 2019: confirmation of lead artists and activation of commissions
- iii. 2019/2020 : concept development including commissioning of script, research into repertoire options, artist residencies
- iv. Summer 2020: rehearsals and footage for any documentary
- v. October/ November 2020: concerts in Galway and Belfast as well as touring exhibition
- vi. Nashville/ Boston performances and broadcasts to be scheduled for autumn 2020

Next Steps

- 3.16** The next steps will be to secure remaining funding, agree broadcasting partners and announce lead artists.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.17** The total project costs are currently estimated at £400,000 with an investment sought from Belfast of up to £100,000 over two financial years. The Council contribution will be match funded

by Galway 2020. Earned income is estimated at £80,000 with the remaining £120,000 to be secured from project and tourism partners. Should fundraising exceed current targets, then the investment from the lead cities will be reduced accordingly. The project will be funded from existing departmental budgets for ongoing cultural programme development.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.18 A music implementation plan is being developed as part of the cultural strategy and will include this project. These plans will be subject to an equality screening and rural needs assessment.”**

After discussion, during which the Director of Development confirmed that the branding for the concerts and other events would be unique to each of the four participating cities, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

Innovation and Growth Commission

The Chief Executive reminded the Committee that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 22nd March, had approved the establishment, for one year, of a City Growth and Innovation Commission to integrate and join up major strategic projects facing the city of Belfast over the next 10-20 years.

She reported that the Commission would inform the development of the next phase of growth required to meet the City's ambitions in the Belfast Agenda, that is, 2021 and beyond, and would seek to ensure:

- that major programmes were integrated and joined up, that is, economic growth must also be sustainable;
- that resilience was built-in, so that the City was better able to withstand shocks and stresses and, by reducing risk, make it increasingly attractive to investment;
- that economic growth was inclusive, with the benefits being experienced by all;
- that opportunities to fund and accelerate this growth were identified and realised;
- that NI Civil Service / NI Government / Invest NI / anchor institutions were aligned to the plans developed; and
- that a strong relationship was built with the private sector.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

The Chief Executive outlined the key outcomes of the Commission's work and confirmed that she would chair the Commission and lead its work and would be accountable to both the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for ensuring that it met its goals and worked within its terms of reference. The Commission would engage regularly with the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and would submit substantive progress reports on a regular basis.

She pointed out that accountability for the day-to-day operation of the Commission would rest with the Commissioner for Resilience, who would be tasked with advising and supporting the Commission, identifying resources (including from 100 Resilient Cities) and producing final outputs, as part of her requirement to produce a Resilience Strategy for the City.

In addition, the Commissioner for Resilience would work alongside the Director of City and Organisational Strategy to ensure that effective support was in place to support the Commission and its work streams, provide research and ensure that it was linked to Community Planning and the City Deal.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Strategic and Operational Issues

Update on Belfast Bikes Scheme

The Director of Economic Development submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To update Members on the performance of the Belfast Bikes scheme in Year 4 of operation and provide details of the strategic review process and timetable.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- i. note the update on the Just East Belfast Bikes performance for Year 4;**
- ii. note the methodology for the strategic review, as agreed by the Committee in January 2019; and**
- iii. agree the proposed process for engagement with elected Members on the strategic review through the Area Working Groups in August and a presentation of draft findings and recommendations to Committee in September.**

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

3.1 A summary of the main issues is outlined below:

Expansion of the Scheme

3.2 5 new stations have been installed in Year 4, as outlined below:

- i. Skainos (operational from 27/08/2018),
- ii. Fraser Pass (operational from 10/01/2019) and
- iii. Connswater Shopping Centre (operational from 11/09/2018).
(Funded by the Inner East, Urban Villages programme, NI Executive Office)
- iv. Carlisle Circus (operational from 18/12/18)
(Funded by the Department for Communities, Building Successful Communities programme).
- v. All State – (operational from 23/07/2018)
(Funded by planning agreement with All State).

Relocation of 5 Stations

3.3 Members will be aware that, in September 2017, the Committee agreed new locations for 5 under utilised stations in the city centre. The stations were relocated to the areas outlined below:

- i. Stranmillis Roundabout - (operational from 26/07/2018)
- ii. Catalyst Inc Titanic Quarter - (operational from 30/08/2018)
- iii. Rosetta Roundabout, Ormeau Road - (operational from 15/08/2018)
- iv. Ormeau Bridge / Ormeau Park - (operational from 01/08/2018) and
- v. Mid Ormeau, Ormeau Road – (installation expected May 2019).

3.4 This approach was to allow a better deployment of the existing resources to increase usage and membership income without increasing the management cost. The relocated stations have been performing well in terms of usage with all in the top 50% for usage. Ormeau Park station is now the most popular station in the network with nearly 1,000 rentals per month. It should be noted that there was difficulty in finding a suitable

site for the mid-Ormeau Road station which resulted in the delay of installation to May 2019.

Membership

- 3.5 Annual membership subscriptions have increased by 10% in Year 4 with over 5,500 members. The uptake of casual membership has reduced, however there is a high uptake of the new 'pay as you go' option. There are currently over 17,000 active members registered to the Belfast Bikes scheme and further analysis of the payment options will be carried out as part of the strategic review.

Journey Numbers

- 3.6 There have been 787,000 journeys since the scheme was launched and 211,052 journeys in Year 4. This is an increase of 14% from Year 3.

Vandalism

- 3.7 Members will be aware that vandalism was an ongoing problem in Year 2 and Year 3. Extensive work has been ongoing with local communities, elected Members, schools and the PSNI to reduce the incidents. As a result, there has been a significant reduction of 70% in costs for Year 4 to £7,494.

Subscriptions and Usage Revenue

- 3.8 Members agreed in September 2017 to a review of the pricing for subscription membership and usage charges. The new membership and usage charges were introduced from the 1st April 2018. The annual subscription has increased from £20 to £25, the casual subscription has increased from £5 to £6 and a new 'pay as you go' (PAYG) option has been introduced with usage charges of £1 for 30 minutes usage. Income from subscriptions and usage charges has increased by 19% in Year 4 to £133,885.

Funding, Sponsorship and Advertising

- 3.9 The income from funding, sponsorship and advertising for Year 4 dropped by 44% to £67,000 due to a delay in commencing the new contract with Just Eat. A review of the procurement process for securing sponsorship will be considered as part of the strategic review.

Expenditure and Investment

3.10 In Year 4, the total cost for the operation of the scheme was £467,000. This cost was offset by the income from usage, funding and sponsorship and as a result the Council has invested £266,000 in Year 4 in the ongoing operation and maintenance of the scheme which is a 10% increase from Year 3.

Strategic Review

3.11 In January 2019, the Committee agreed to undertake a comprehensive strategic review of the Just Eat Belfast Bikes scheme and make recommendations for the future management, operation and potential expansion of the scheme. In particular, the review will assess options for maximising usage of the existing network as well as potential to reduce costs and increase income from usage of the scheme. The review will also consider an approach for any potential sustainable growth of the scheme. ‘Intelligent Transport Services’ was commissioned in May 2019 to carry out the strategic review of the scheme. The table below outlines the previously agreed scope of the review against the proposed timetable:

Stages	Methodology and Approach	Timetable
Assessment of the current network	<p>Detailed analysis of the current scale, coverage and density of the network.</p> <p>Factors to be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station Location; • Usage of each station – Rentals and returns; • Capacity of the station too big or too small; • Network of stations (distance between stations); • Access to quality bicycle infrastructure; • Customer and operational feedback; • Contribution to the Belfast Agenda objectives 	May / June 2019

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

Stages	Methodology and Approach	Timetable
Review of the Scheme Objectives	The review will carry out analysis to measure if the scheme is meeting the objectives set at project initiation.	May 2019
Review of operations	The review will consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current operation and management system; • Distribution and maintenance activities; • Infrastructure specification – terminals, bikes and docking points; • Security and vandalism including innovation in security and asset tracking; • Marketing of the scheme; and • App / website. 	June 2019
Future Expansion	The review will consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing scheme coverage and identify options for potential expansion • Risks and barriers to expansion • A business model for any future expansion (capital and revenue) <p>Production of a prioritised, fully costed and phased expansion plan based on an assessment of options.</p>	June / August 2019
Financial sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the procurement options for sponsorship and advertising in order to maximise income and streamline the process; • Review of the subscription and/or usage fees; • Consider alternative revenue sources - public funds & private investment; and • Marketing of the scheme to promote growth in membership and usage. 	July / August 2019

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

Stages	Methodology and Approach	Timetable
Stakeholder and Elected members engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of initial findings at Area Working Group meetings • Public Survey • One to one stakeholder meetings 	June to August 2019
Strategic Review findings and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of draft findings and recommendations to Committee • Finalise Strategic Review 	September 2019

Member and Stakeholder Engagement

- 3.12 The appointed consultant ITS will engage with Members as part of their methodology, to ensure an integrated, collaborative approach to identifying the needs of the city to improve operation and consider expansion of the scheme. It is crucial that the strategic review is based on a comprehensive and reliable evidence base. It is proposed that ITS will carry out initial assessment of the current network and present findings to the Area Working groups as well as discuss options for expansion. Additional workshops with members can be scheduled if required. A public survey and discussions with key stakeholders such as Sustrans, Belfast Trust, DfI and community groups will also inform the findings.**

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.13 A budget of £29,280 is required to carry out the Strategic Review and is within existing departmental budgets.**

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.14 None.”**

In response concerns which had been raised by the Members around the lack of provision in some parts of the City, the Chief Executive pointed out the scheme had focused initially upon the City centre and that its roll out to several strategic sites beyond there could be attributed largely to funding being secured from external sources.

She added that the expansion of the scheme to other parts of the City would be included within the strategic review’s Terms of Reference but stressed that, should additional sites be suggested, there would be costs associated with the purchase and operation of bikes and those would need to be considered as part of the Council’s rate setting process.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**City Growth and Regeneration
Committee Priorities 2019/20**

The Strategic Director of Place and Economy reminded the Committee that it was responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects directed towards the regeneration of the City, in the context of outcomes agreed in the Belfast Agenda and corporate plans and other corporate strategy decisions. It was responsible also for the oversight of the exercise of Council functions in relation to economic development, urban development, tourism, culture and arts, European and international relations, car parks, city markets, city events, Belfast Castle, Belfast Zoo and Malone House.

He drew the Committee's attention to the following headline priorities for the Committee's oversight in 2019/20 and confirmed that they would be shaped by emerging developments such as the City Deal proposals and the Inclusive Growth Framework:

Growing the Economy

- Progress with the Belfast Dublin Economic Corridor;
- Tourism development, including implementing the neighbourhood tourism strategy, and developing a leisure and business tourism strategy with partners;
- Develop the Enterprise Framework action plan for the City to improve and join up provision of support;
- Provide support to entrepreneurs to start a business and for existing businesses to grow, including oversight of the Innovation Factory; and
- Promote and market the city internationally to position Belfast as a location of choice for business, tourism, education and investment

Living Here

- Agree and deliver the Cultural Strategy 'A City Imagining', including the development of implementation and investment programmes.

City Development

- Progress city regeneration and investment opportunities, including the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy priorities, projects and initiatives to drive the growth and regeneration of the city core and surrounding areas. This includes:
 - Progressing key projects, initiatives and developments such as the Destination Hub visitor attraction;

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

- Enabling and influencing major city-wide developments to maximise regeneration potential and deliver on inclusive growth;
- Maximising housing opportunities in the city through working directly with key stakeholders;
- Engaging with and lobbying central government to prioritise and shape major infrastructure investment, such as Living with Water programme;
- Progressing the Council-led infrastructure study, in conjunction with partners; and
- Improving city connectivity; including progressing the Car Parking strategy, the strategic review of Belfast Bikes and opportunities to enhance pedestrian connectivity in the city centre.

Working and Learning

- Support residents to access employment and/or upskilling opportunities through our programme of employment academies, European Social Fund projects and working with our partners to establish effective pathways of support; and
- Educational underachievement; including working with key partners to design and test new employability approaches targeted at those at risk of becoming NEETs and to identify and provide early intervention support to young people.

The Strategic Director of Place and Economy confirmed that a workshop was planned for August in order to allow Members to discuss these priorities in greater detail. A more detailed Committee Plan would thereafter be submitted to the Committee for approval.

The Committee approved its headline priorities for 2019/20, as outlined.

**Appointment of Director (Operational) of
City Regeneration and Development**

The Committee noted the contents of a report in relation to the recruitment process and the appointment of Mrs. Cathy Reynolds to the post of Director (Operational) of City Regeneration and Development and congratulated her on her success.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

Schedule of Meetings

The Committee approved the following schedule of meetings for the period from August till December, 2019 and agreed that it should continue to meet at 5.15 p.m.:

- Wednesday, 7th August (monthly meeting)
- Wednesday, 28th August (special meeting)
- Wednesday, 11th September (monthly meeting)
- Wednesday, 25th September (special meeting)
- Wednesday, 9th October (monthly meeting)
- Wednesday, 23rd October (special meeting)
- Wednesday, 6th November (monthly meeting)
- Wednesday, 27th November (special meeting)
- Wednesday, 4th December (monthly meeting)
- Wednesday, 18th December (special meeting)

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Supporting the Writers of Belfast

Councillor Nicholl highlighted the achievements in 2019 of two local authors, namely, Kelly McCaughrain, who had attained the CBI Book of the Year, the Eilís Dillon and the Children's Choice Awards, and Jan Carson, who had secured the EU Prize for Literature Ireland. Those had followed the award in 2018 of the Man Booker Prize to Anna Burns.

She explained that there had, for several years, been efforts to raise the profile of local writers and that the aforementioned awards could act as an inspiration to others wishing to pursue writing or acquire other artistic skills.

Accordingly, she requested that a report be submitted to a future meeting outlining the support which the Council was providing currently to prospective writers and, in terms of other councils/regions, how that support might be enhanced.

The Committee acceded to the request.

Funding of PLACE NI

Councillor Ferguson informed the Committee that PLACE NI played a vital role in promoting the built heritage and environment and that it had delivered many valuable

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

projects across the City. She reported that the organisation had been informed recently by the Arts Council that its application for funding for next year had been unsuccessful and that PLACE NI had raised concerns around the process which had led to that decision. Therefore, the support of the Council was essential in ensuring that PLACE NI could continue to operate.

Councillor O'Hara highlighted also the significant work which PLACE NI had delivered and confirmed that it had an important part to play, in the context of meeting the challenges faced by the City in relation to, for example, climate change and resilience. He too expressed concerns regarding the removal of funding by the Arts Council and stressed that the Council should examine ways in which to support PLACE NI.

The Committee was informed that a number of representatives of PLACE NI were in attendance and Ms. A. Neely, Acting Chief Executive, was invited to provide further details around its current funding issues.

Ms. Neely informed the Committee that PLACE NI researched, designed and delivered creative projects which connected people to place and delivered a public programme of tours, talks, exhibitions and festivals. The Council had been instrumental in its establishment in 2004, by providing both a premises and officer support.

She reported that PLACE NI had, for fifteen years, been core funded by the Arts Council which, in turn, had allowed it to lever financial support from other sources. She explained that it was the organisation's view that the decision to refuse funding had been based upon inaccuracies and that it had requested a review of the Arts Council's procedures and was appealing the decision through the Ombudsman's Office. She stressed that the removal of funding was placing the organisation at immediate risk of closure and that, at this point, it would be unlikely to operate beyond 31st August. In terms of impact, its closure would lead to the loss of four jobs, numerous freelance contracts and volunteer opportunities, a resource for students and educators, significant tourism opportunities and contracts with artists and partner organisations. Ms. Neely concluded by inviting the Council to support PLACE NI by making available emergency financial support and by requesting the Arts Council to reconsider its decision to remove funding for next year.

In response to a question from a Member, Ms. Neely confirmed that the funding which PLACE NI had, in the past, received from the Arts Council represented approximately 50% of its overall budget and had been used primarily to cover salary costs. The amount requested from the Arts Council for next year had been £87,000.

The Chief Executive informed the Committee that the budgets for Council Departments were established each February, as part of the rate-setting process, and that it was difficult for funding requests to be considered outside of that framework. She confirmed that an end-of-year finance report was due to be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in June and that requests for funding would have to be considered in the context of that report.

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 5th June, 2019**

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. agreed that a letter be forwarded to the Arts Council and to the Department for Communities, its funding provider, affirming the Council's support for the work of PLACE NI and inviting the Arts Council to re-examine its funding application;
- ii. agreed that officers meet with representatives of PLACE NI to discuss other ways in which the Council could support the organisation in the short and medium term;
- iii. agreed that the end-of-year finance report being submitted in June to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee should include PLACE NI's request for funding; and
- iv. agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting providing an update on the funding of PLACE NI.

Chairperson

Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 19th June, 2019

MEETING OF LICENSING COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor S. Baker (Chairperson);
The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor McReynolds;
The High Sherriff, Alderman Sandford;
Aldermen Copeland and McCoubrey; and
Councillors Bunting, Donnelly, Ferguson, Groves,
Howard, Hussey, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Magee,
Magennis, McAteer and Smyth.
- In attendance: Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Mr. S. Hewitt, Building Control Manager;
Ms. L. Coll, Solicitor;
Mrs. M. Deveney, Solicitor;
Ms. M. Dougherty, Senior Building Control Surveyor; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Hutchinson and Whyte.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 10th April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 29th April, 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.

Schedule of Meetings 2019

The Committee agreed the following schedule of meetings for the Licensing Committee, for August – December 2019, with all meetings commencing at 5pm:

- Wednesday, 14th August;
- Wednesday, 18th September;
- Wednesday, 16th October;
- Wednesday, 13th November; and
- Wednesday, 11th December.

Delegated Matters

**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.

**Application to provide outdoor musical entertainment
beyond 11.00 pm - Falls Park**

The Committee was informed that a 7-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence and a 7-Day Annual Indoor Licence for a Marquee had been granted for Falls Park and both had been used to hold numerous events in the past; primarily for the Féile an Phobail event. The Licences were held by the City and Neighbourhood Services Department and were transferred to the organisers for the duration of their event. The days and hours during which entertainment might be provided both outdoors and in a marquee, were Monday to Sunday from 11.30 am to 11.00 pm.

The Committee was advised that Féile an Phobail would, this year, be taking place between 8th and 11th August and that the organisers were seeking approval to extend the standard hours on the Seven-day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence for the Falls Park to enable entertainment to be provided until 1.00 a.m. on three of those nights. Approval for the use of the venue had been granted by the People and Communities Committee at its meeting on 4th June.

The Building Control Manager explained that, whilst the organisers had applied to operate until 1.00 a.m. on the nights of Thursday, 8th, Saturday, 10th and Sunday, 11th August, it was envisaged that entertainment would run to 1.00 a.m. only on the first of those nights and that it would conclude before that time on the remaining two evenings. They had stated that the ability to operate until 1.00 a.m. would allow them to develop a programme of diversionary activities for young people and would assist in addressing ongoing antisocial behaviour issues. Whilst the programme of entertainment had yet to be finalised, it would be the genre and type of entertainment similar to previous years and would appeal to all age groups.

He pointed out that, in addition to the entertainment and social aspect of the event, there were also proposals to introduce activities involving sport and discussion for the youth to engage with such as a televised international boxing event on 3rd August, however this activity would fall outside the scope of the Outdoor Entertainments Licence.

He reminded the Committee that, since this application related to the extension of the hours permitted under an existing licence condition, rather than the variation of the Entertainments Licence itself, there had been no requirement for it to be advertised and advised that the Council was awaiting a response from the Police Service of Northern Ireland in relation to the event.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th June, 2019**

In relation to Health, Safety and Welfare Issues, the Building Control Manager reported that the officers had engaged with the organisers but await receipt of the Event Management Plan, however, inspections carried out at previous events organised by Féile an Phobail found that the organisers had adhered to the health, safety and welfare management requirements during that time.

In terms of noise nuisance, he confirmed that the Council's Environmental Protection Unit had been notified of the intention to provide entertainment until 1.00 a.m. and that it was currently awaiting an acoustic report. He advised that twenty noise complaints had been received in 2018, none of which had necessitated formal action, and stressed that the organisers would be required to demonstrate that commercial and residential properties would not experience unreasonable disturbance and had been advised that significant complaints could lead to further nights being curtailed. He added that the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 provided the Council with additional powers to address noise nuisance from 11.00 p.m. onwards, if required.

The Committee agreed to extend the standard hours on the Seven-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence for the Falls Park, to enable entertainment to take place until 1.00 a.m. the following morning on the nights of Thursday, 8th, Saturday, 10th and Sunday, 11th August, subject to all technical requirements being met to the satisfaction of Council officers and no objections being received from the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

**Application for the Provisional Grant of an Amusement Permit
- Oasis Gaming Centre, Wellington Place**

The Building Control Manager outlined the aforementioned application for the provisional grant of an Amusement Permit under the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.

He highlighted that, after the agenda had been published, Appendix two of the report 'Oasis Supporting Statement' had been amended to provide the full statement which had been submitted by the applicant.

The Committee was informed that Mr. M. Trimble, Oasis Retail Services Ltd., was in attendance and he was welcomed by the Chairperson.

Mr. Trimble informed the Committee that the current premises had been operating as an adult gaming centre for 18 years and, to improve the customer experience and stay ahead of their competitors, they wished to create further space and amenity for their customers. He pointed out that they had acquired the rear portion of the ground floor of the adjacent building and the shopfront and remaining floor space of 9 Wellington Place would remain under the Landlord's control.

During discussion, Members raised concerns in relation to the application's non-compliance of the assessment criteria within the Council's Amusement Permit Policy.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th June, 2019**

After discussion, it was,

Moved by Councillor Magee,

Seconded by Councillor Howard,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the application until the next meeting to allow the Committee to review the additional information that had been published in Appendix 2 of the report.

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

Application for the variation of a 7-Day Annual Entertainments Licence - The Merchant Hotel

The Building Control Manager submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To consider an application for the variation of the 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for the Merchant Hotel, based on the Council's Standard Conditions to provide indoor music, singing, dancing or any other entertainment of a like kind.**

Premises and Locations

**The Merchant Hotel
16 Skipper Street
Belfast
BT1 2DZ**

Applicant

**Mr James Sinton
The Merchant Hotel Ltd
C/O 3 Hill Street
Belfast
BT1 2LA.**

- 1.2 The nature of the variation is to extend the hours during which entertainment may be provided to the USC first floor rear bar on Friday and Saturday nights from 1.00 am to 3.00 am the following morning.**
- 1.3 Members are reminded that the normal process for dealing with Entertainments Licence applications which are not the subject of objections is that the Director of Planning and Place will grant the licence as provided for in the Council's Scheme of Delegation.**
- 1.4 However, in light of the fact that the applicant has applied for a variation to extend the hours of entertainment beyond**

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th June, 2019**

1.00 am, the application is being presented to you for your consideration.

1.5 A location map is attached as Appendix 1.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Taking into account the information presented and representations received you are required to make a decision to either:

- 1. Approve the application for the variation of the 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence, or**
- 2. Approve the application for the variation of the 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence with special conditions, or**
- 3. Refuse the application for the variation of the 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence.**

2.2 If the application is refused, or Special Conditions are attached to the Licence to which the applicant does not consent, then the applicant may appeal the Council's decision within 21 days of notification of that decision to the Recorders Court.

2.3 Should the Committee decide to refuse the variation application, and the applicant decides to appeal, the existing Licence will continue with its present Conditions until the Appeal is determined.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

The areas currently Licensed to provide indoor entertainment are:

- The Merchant Hotel, with a maximum capacity of 300 persons.**
- The Cloth Ear, with a maximum capacity of 300 persons.**
- Ollies Nightclub, with a maximum capacity of 550 persons.**
- Ollies Garden Room, with a maximum capacity of 20 persons.**
- Bert's, with a maximum capacity of 240 persons.**
- Conference Room 1, with a maximum capacity of 100 persons.**
- Conference Room 2, with a maximum capacity of 60 persons.**

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th June, 2019**

- **Conference Room 3, with a maximum capacity of 60 persons.**
- **Conference Room 1, 2 & 3, with a maximum capacity of 220 persons.**
- **4th Floor, with a maximum capacity of 40 persons.**
- **USC Ground Floor Front Bar, with a maximum capacity of 50 persons.**
- **USC Ground Floor Rear Bar, with a maximum capacity of 144 persons.**
- **USC First Floor Front Bar, with a maximum capacity of 30 persons.**
- **USC First Floor Rear Bar, with a maximum capacity of 220 persons.**

3.2 The days and hours during which the premises are currently licensed to provide indoor entertainment are:

- **Monday to Saturday: 11.30 am to 1.00 am the following morning**
- **Sunday: 12.30pm to 12.00 midnight**

3.3 The following Special Condition is attached to the current entertainments licence: -

In addition to the above standard operating hours entertainment may be provided in Ollie's Nightclub to 3.00am seven days a week.

3.4 The applicant has applied to extend the hours of the USC first floor rear bar on Friday and Saturday nights to 3.00 am the following morning.

3.5 The premise operates as a hotel with various bars and a nightclub with entertainment being provided in the form of live bands and DJs.

3.6 Reasons for the Variation

The applicant has stated the main reason they wish to extend the hours of entertainment is to allow for club nights on the first floor to fulfil customer demand for a late night music venue.

A copy of the applicant's submission is appended to this report.

3.7 Representations

Notice of the application has been advertised and no written representation has been received.

3.8 PSNI

The Police Service of Northern Ireland has been consulted and confirmed that they have no objection to the application. A copy of their correspondence is attached as Appendix 3.

3.9 NIFRS

The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service has been consulted in relation to the application and confirmed that they have no objection to the applications.

3.10 Health, Safety and Welfare Inspections

Members are advised that Officers have carried out a total of two During Performance Inspections over the past 12 months. On each occasion, all technical matters were satisfactory, and the appropriate measures and management procedures were being implemented effectively.

3.11 The premises have also been subject to inspections as part of the Entertainments Licence application renewal process and Officers of the Service are satisfied with all safety measures and management procedures.

3.12 Noise issues

No noise complaints have been received in the last 12 months.

3.13 Given the nature of the entertainment at the venue an acoustic report outlining the measures to be taken to ensure minimal disturbance to neighbouring residential premises, both due to noise breakout or from patron activity, was requested and forwarded to the Council's Environmental Protection Unit (EPU). At the time of writing this report EPU comments were not available therefore we will advise of their comments at the Committee meeting.

3.14 Members are reminded that the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2011 gives the Council additional powers in relation to the control of entertainment noise after 11.00 pm.

3.15 Applicant

The applicant, and/or their representatives, will be available at your meeting to answer any queries you may have in relation to the application.

3.16 Financial and Resource Implications

Officers carry out during performance inspections on premises providing entertainment which is catered for within existing budgets.

3.17 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no issues associated with this report.”

The Committee agreed, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, to grant a variation of a Seven-day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence in respect of The Merchant Hotel, with entertainment being permitted, in future, to take place till 3.00 a.m. on a Friday and Saturday night on the USC first floor rear bar.

Application for the variation of a 7-Day Annual Entertainments Licence - Botanic Inn

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 To consider an application for the variation of the 7-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for the hours during which entertainment may be provided at the Botanic Inn, based on the Council’s Standard Conditions to provide indoor music, singing, dancing or any other entertainment of a like kind.

Premises and Locations

Applicant

Botanic Inn
23-27 Malone Road
Belfast
BT9 6RU

Mr Felix Mooney
Cathal GM Ltd
Botanic Inn
23-27 Malone
Road
Belfast
BT9 6RU.

- 1.2 The original variation application for the Botanic Inn to extend the hours of entertainment to 3.00am on Monday to Saturday nights was received on 22 November 2016.
- 1.3 Numerous objections were received against this application but, all objections have now been withdrawn, on the basis that the applicant has amended his application so as to replicate the extended hours of entertainment, that already apply on the

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th June, 2019**

first floor, on the ground floor. This would mean entertainment may be provided until 2.00am the following morning on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday on both floors. In addition, entertainment will be permitted to 2.00am should Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve, St. Patrick's night, Easter Monday, May Day or Halloween fall on a Sunday, Monday, Tuesday or Friday night.

1.4 A location map is attached as Appendix 1 (copy available [here](#)).

2.0 **Recommendations**

2.1 Taking into account the information presented and any representations made you are required to make a decision to either:

1. Approve the application for the variation of the Entertainments Licence; or
2. Approve the application for the variation of the Entertainments Licence with Special Conditions, or
3. Refuse the application for the variation of the Entertainments Licence.

2.2 If the application is refused, or Special Conditions are attached to the Licence to which the applicant does not consent, then the applicant may appeal the Council's decision within 21 days of notification of that decision to the Recorders Court.

2.3 Should the Committee decide to refuse the variation application, and the applicant decides to appeal, the existing Licence will continue with its present Conditions until the Appeal is determined.

3.0 **Main report**

3.1 **Key Issues**

Members are reminded that, at your meetings on 19 April 2017 and 20 June 2018, you considered reports regarding representations received in respect of the application and agreed to hear from both the applicant and objectors at a future meeting.

3.2 **Representations**

Written representations objecting to the application were received from various parties including Paula Bradshaw MLA,

PSNI, local residents' associations and individual local residents.

3.3 A synopsis of the objections is outlined below:

- These premises are located near residential streets in the greater University area and Lower Malone. It is totally inappropriate for a pub to open to 3.00 am in this area.
- Many streets in the surrounding area are of a residential nature and many of the owners have to work the next day and have children trying to sleep.
- There has been an ongoing problem with antisocial behaviour in the wider university area and noise disturbance from students making their way back to the Elms Village and other student housing in the area.

However, due to ongoing discussion, facilitated by the Service, between the applicant and the various objectors all representations against this application have now been withdrawn.

3.4 Details of the Premises and Variation Proposals

The areas currently licensed to provide indoor entertainment are:

- Ground Floor Bar, with a maximum capacity of 550 persons.
- 1st Floor Nightclub, with a maximum capacity of 500 persons.

3.5 The days and hours during which the premises are currently licensed to provide indoor entertainment are:

- Monday to Saturday: 11.30 am to 1.00 am the following morning, and
- Sunday: 12.30 pm to 12.00 midnight

3.7 The following Special Condition is also attached to the current Entertainments Licence: -

Entertainment may be provided until 2.00am the following morning on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday to the first floor areas only. In addition, entertainment will be permitted to 2.00am should Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve, St. Patrick's night, Easter Monday, May Day or Halloween fall on a Sunday, Monday, Tuesday or Friday night.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th June, 2019**

- 3.8** After discussion between the applicant and the objectors the applicant has amended the original variation application, which was to provide entertainment to 3.00am on Monday to Saturday nights, and now wishes to extend the hours of the ground floor bar to replicate those of the first floor as noted in the Special Condition at 3.7.
- 3.9** The applicant has provided a rationale to support their application for the extension in hours, this being: -
- They are a family business which has operated successfully at this location for some time as and we understand and strive to serve the communities that make up the location at which we operate as a business. We have always tried to serve the community in which we operate and are mindful of the needs of that community.
 - They engage with local stakeholders on a regular basis.
 - They are the nearest residential group to the Botanic Inn – The Wellington Park has 75 bedrooms and we will be very conscious of noise, nuisance or disturbance to these guests.
 - They carry out sound checks and limit the sound as recommended by a noise impact survey of the immediate area carried out by F.R.Marks.
 - They have written to all taxi firms asking that they respect the neighbourhood especially after 11.00pm.
 - They advise patrons when leaving the premises to respect the local area.
 - They provide a well-managed, safe environment for customers to socialise in thus negating the need for ‘house parties’
 - They strive to work with all their stakeholders and value our reputation as a safe venue to meet and socialise.
- 3.10** Members may wish to note that, at your meeting in August 2013 when the variation to provide entertainment to 2.00am in the nightclub on the first floor was being considered the applicant at that time, Mr Stephen Magorrian, advised Committee that, should the nightclub be permitted to provide entertainment until 2.00am, it would make the dispersal of patrons more manageable, as they would be leaving the ground and first floors at different times.
- 3.11** The premise operates as a public bar and nightclub with entertainment being provided on both floors in the form of live bands and DJs.
- 3.12** Members are reminded that the normal process for dealing with Entertainments Licence applications which are not the

subject of objections is that the licence will be granted as provided for in the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

3.13 However, because the applicant has applied for a variation to extend the hours of entertainment past 1.00 am, the application is being presented to you for consideration.

3.14 PSNI

The Police Service of Northern Ireland originally objected to the 3.00am extension as it was proposed for midweek and they would not have adequate resources to facilitate this. Due to changes to the extension of hours proposed by the applicant the PSNI have confirmed that they are no longer objecting to the application.

3.15 Health, Safety and Welfare Inspections

Members are advised that Officers have carried out 3 During Performance Inspections over the past 12 months. On each occasion, all technical matters were satisfactory, and the appropriate measures and management procedures were being implemented effectively.

3.16 Noise issues

No noise complaints have been received by the Service in the last 12 months. Members are reminded that the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2011 gives the Council additional powers in relation to the control of entertainment noise after 11.00 pm.

3.17 Applicant

The applicant and/or their representatives will be available at your meeting should you choose to hear from them or have any queries in relation to the application.

3.18 Financial and Resource Implications

Officers carry out during performance inspections on premises providing entertainment which is catered for within existing budgets.

3.19 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no issues associated with this report."

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th June, 2019**

The Committee agreed, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, to grant a variation of a Seven-day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence in respect of the Botanic Inn, with entertainment being permitted, in future, to take place till 2.00 a.m. the following morning on a Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday on both floors of the premises, and in addition, entertainment would be permitted to 2.00 a.m. should Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve, St. Patrick's night, Easter Monday, May Day or Halloween fall on a Sunday, Monday Tuesday or Friday.

Application for the Variation of a 7-Day Annual Entertainments Licence - McKenna's Bar

The Building Control Manager informed the Committee that an application had been received for the variation of a Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence in respect of McKenna's Bar, 25-29 Garmoyle Street, based upon the Council's standard condition to provide music, singing, dancing or any other entertainment of a like kind.

He reported that entertainment was provided currently on a Monday to Saturday till 1.00 a.m. and on a Sunday till midnight. The licensee had now applied to provide additional hours of entertainment till 3.00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday, primarily on the basis that he was losing out on local custom and required the additional hours to sustain its viability and to compete with other premises in the city.

The Building Control Manager confirmed that no written representation had been received in relation to the application and that the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and the Police Service of Northern Ireland had not objected.

He advised that, in such circumstances, it was normal practice for the Entertainments Licence to be issued under the Council's Scheme of Delegation. However, given that the application related to the extension of the hours of entertainment beyond 1.00 a.m., it was being presented to the Committee for consideration.

He highlighted that the premises had been subject to inspections as part of the application renewal process which had revealed that the Conditions of the entertainments Licence were being adhered to and operational and management procedures were being implemented effectively.

The Committee agreed to vary the Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for McKenna's Bar, 25-29 Garmoyle Street, thereby permitting entertainment to take place till 3.00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday.

Application for the Grant of a 14-Day Occasional Outdoor Entertainments Licence - Seaview Stadium

The Building Control Manager informed the Committee that an application had been received for the grant of a 14-Day Occasional Outdoor Entertainments Licence in respect of Seaview Stadium from Crusaders Sports and Social Development Trust. He advised that the application was for a variety of events, including a dance event, which had taken place on 1st June, 2019.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th June, 2019**

It was reported that the application for this Licence was only received on 25th April, 2019 in respect of an event that was scheduled to take place on 1st June 2019. As there was no Licensing Committee in May, due to the Local Government elections, there wasn't opportunity to place the application before Committee prior to the date of the event. As a significant number of tickets had been sold, Chief Officers, in consultation with the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Licensing Committee, agreed to grant approval for the 1-day event only and on condition that the application would then be submitted to the Licensing Committee for consideration in June.

The Licence was therefore issued for the event on 1st June, 2019 as, from a regulatory and enforcement perspective, this was preferable to the event proceeding unlicensed.

The Building Control Manager pointed out that a public notice of the application had been placed and that no written representation had been lodged as a result of the advertisement. He also confirmed that that the Police Service of Northern Ireland had offered no objections.

After discussion, the Committee agreed, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, to grant a Fourteen-day Occasional Outdoor Entertainments Licence for Seaview Stadium, St Vincent's Street and noted that one of these events had already taken place.

**Application to provide outdoor musical entertainment
beyond 11.00 pm - Woodvale Park**

The Building Control Manager reported that the Twaddell and Woodvale Residents' Association had submitted an application to extend the standard hours on the Seven-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence for Woodvale Park until 1.00 a.m. on the nights of Tuesday, 9th and Thursday, 11th July.

He advised that a 7-Day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence and a 7-Day Annual Indoor Licence for a Marquee had been granted for Woodvale Park and both had been used to hold events in the past. The Licences were held by the City and Neighbourhood Services Department and had been transferred to the organisers for the duration of their event.

The days and hours during which entertainment might be provided both outdoors and in a marquee were Monday to Sunday from 11.30 am to 11.00 pm.

He explained that the Residents' Association had been an active participant in the Council's Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme and that it had, since 2008, organised several successful events within the Woodvale Park.

The group had confirmed that this year's event would run from Tuesday, 9th until Thursday, 11th July and that its request for additional hours was based primarily around the desire to bring mainstream artists to one of Belfast's most disadvantaged areas as well as provide proactive diversionary activities at a time of potential heightened tensions. The People and Communities Committee, at its meeting on 4th June, had granted approval for the use of the park.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th June, 2019**

The Building Control Manager confirmed that, since the Residents' Association were seeking to extend the hours permitted under an existing licence condition, rather than vary the Entertainments Licence itself, there had been no requirement for the application to be advertised. The Police Service of Northern Ireland had not objected to the application and officers from the Building Control Service and the Parks Service were working with the organisers to agree an event management plan, a layout plan and an appropriate occupancy figure.

He pointed out that the Council's Environmental Protection Unit had received five complaints in relation to last year's event and that it would seek to ensure that an appropriate noise management plan was developed, in consultation with all relevant parties, in order to minimise noise breakout and disturbance. He added that the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 provided the Council with additional powers to address noise nuisance from 11.00 p.m. onwards and that, should significant complaints be received, future nights could be curtailed.

The Committee agreed that the standard hours on the Seven-day Annual Outdoor Entertainments Licence for the Woodvale Park be extended to enable entertainment to take place until 1.00 a.m. the following morning on the nights of Tuesday, 9th and Thursday, 11th July, subject to all technical requirements being met to the satisfaction of Council officers.

Designation of Street Trading Sites

The Building Control Manager reported that a request had been received from Victoria Square Management to designate land at the entrance into Victoria Square from Ann Street for the sale of hot and cold food and non-alcoholic beverages or similar commodities. He highlighted that the intention of the applicant was to use the site for a coffee van type of operator trading in the area.

He advised that the Council had also received a request from the Department for Communities, Belfast Regeneration Directorate as landowner of Queen's Quay, requesting that the three designated sites on their land at Queen's Quay be rescinded.

He explained that the Street Trading Act (NI) 2001 sets out the procedures which must be followed in considering whether to designate a site or rescind a designation. The steps the Council must undertake were summarised as follows:

- Give public notice of the proposed resolution;
- Consult with the PSNI, Department for Infrastructure, licence holders (if any) and other persons it considered appropriate;
- Consider any representations relating to the proposed resolution which it had received;
- After the Council had considered those representations it might, if it thinks fit, pass the Designating Resolution; and
- Publish notice of the outcome for 2 consecutive weeks in 2 or more newspapers, giving not less than 28 days between the date of the publication and the date set out by the Council when the Designating Resolution would come into effect.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 19th June, 2019**

He highlighted that a further report would be submitted at a future meeting to summarise the outcome of the consultation process and the Committee would then be able to determine whether to designate the site and its conditions.

Taking into account the information presented for the creation of a new designated site and the rescinding of 3 designated sites, the Committee agreed to:

- Permit the publication of the statutory 28-day notice of the proposed resolution; and
- Authorise consultation with statutory bodies and other persons who may have an interest in the proposals.

Chairperson

Planning Committee

Tuesday, 11th June, 2019

MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Carson (Chairperson);
Alderman Rodgers; and
Councillors Brooks, Canavan, Collins,
Garrett, Groogan, Hussey, McKeown,
McMullan, Murphy, Nicholl, O'Hara
and Pankhurst.

In attendance: Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and
Building Control;
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development
Management);
Mr. K. Sutherland, Planning Manager (Planning Policy);
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the Pre-Determination Hearing and of the meeting of 9th April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 29th April, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Hussey declared an interest in Item 8b, LA04/2018/2470/O, Mixed use regeneration and development and refurbishment of existing listed Butchers building with new fixed use buildings at Winetavern Street, Gresham Street and North Street, in that he had taken part in a site visit to the area, as a Member of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, but he confirmed that he had not made any predetermination in relation to the proposed development and so he remained in the room.

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in item 8m, LA04/2019/0417/F, Purpose built managed student accommodation with 253 beds at Botanic Link, in that she had attended a Pre-Application Discussion (PAD) on behalf of her employer and had made comments at the meeting. She therefore left the meeting for the duration of the item.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

Schedule of Meetings 2019

The Committee agreed:

1. to hold a Special meeting on Tuesday, 2nd July at 5p.m.; and
2. that the Planning Committee would meet, at 5p.m., on the following dates from August to December, 2019
 - Tuesday, 13th August;
 - Thursday, 15th August (if required);
 - Tuesday, 17th September;
 - Thursday, 19th September (if required);
 - Tuesday, 15th October;
 - Thursday, 17th October (if required);
 - Tuesday, 12th November;
 - Thursday, 14th November (if required);
 - Tuesday, 10th December; and
 - Thursday, 12th December (if required).

Committee Site Visit

It was noted that the Committee had undertaken a site visit on 31st May in respect of the following planning application LA04/2018/0811/F – Mixed use development comprising offices, residential apartments (including affordable), hotel and serviced apartments, retail and professional services, community and cultural, leisure uses, cafes, bars, restaurants, with associated car parking, circulation and servicing arrangements; public realm works, landscaping, replacement of existing pedestrian bridge fixed to railway bridge and associated access works to Short Strand and Bridge End with other infrastructural works, and demolition of existing structures including boundary walls on lands at former Sirocco Works Short Strand and adjacent to Bridge End and the River Lagan.

Abandonments, Extinguishments and Vesting Orders

The Committee was apprised of correspondence which had been received relating to:

1. An extinguishment of a Public Right of Way Order No. 1 at lands at Gilnahirk Road;
2. A Vesting Order which had become operational at land at former Hannahstown Hill/Glen Road; and
3. The proposed abandonment of:
 - lands at Linen Mill Grove, Edenderry, under the Roads (NI) Order 1993, in order to facilitate access to a new housing development;
 - part of the footpath on the Ormeau Road in order to rectify a mapping discrepancy and facilitate the disposal of the

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

land, part of which had previously been abandoned in 2017 under MD2/Z/03/1015;

- part of the road at Seymour Row, Belfast in order to rectify title to the area and incorporate the land into the existing car park; and
- part of the land/footpath passing under the Station Street Flyover in order to facilitate a multi-agency redevelopment scheme for the area.

The Committee noted the correspondence.

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 2nd April and 3rd June, 2019.

Local Development Plan (LDP) Update

(Mr. K. Sutherland, Planning Manager (Policy), and Mr. D. O'Kane, Principal Planning Officer, attended in connection with this item).

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 provide members with an update on:

- **Consultation on the draft Plan Strategy (dPS) and the next stage in the Local Development Plan (LDP) process;**
- **Preparation of the Council's Housing Land Availability Report for the 2018/19 monitoring period and its accompanying online map portal; and**
- **Additional research commissioned as part of the LDP evidence base.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the updates.

3.0 Background

- 3.1** The draft Plan Strategy (dPS) is the first of two documents that will comprise the new Local Development Plan (LDP). The dPS is more strategic at this stage (in line with government guidance) setting out an over-arching strategy and general operational policies that will apply across the city. The dPS is ambitious, striving through a plan led approach to achieve the thriving socially inclusive city, reflecting the objectives at the heart of the Belfast Agenda. It will also realise the Regional Development Strategy's (RDS 2035) ambition for Belfast as the regional economic driver.
- 3.2** The dPS was published last Autumn for a formal consultation that closed on 15th November 2018. A further eight week consultation period on the submissions received last Autumn, to allow for counter-representations, closed on 26th April 2019. This report therefore provides an update on the outcome of this counter-representation process and outlines the next stage in the LDP process.
- 3.3** As part of the new statutory responsibilities the Council produces the Housing Land Availability Summary Report annually to inform the plan process. The latest report for 2018/19 (available on modern.gov) outlines the position in respect of housing development and provides a snapshot of the amount of land available for new residential development at the 1st April 2019. This regular monitoring is an important element of the evidence base for the preparation of the LDP and will be supported by an online map portal (publicly available) showing the status of all existing housing monitor sites. The web based portal will seek to illustrate some of the key information contained within the report in a map based form.
- 3.4** Alongside the regular housing monitor and other publications, additional research has also been commenced to help broaden the LDP's evidence base and inform the Council's response to the draft Plan Strategy consultations. This includes research to consider the potential impact of the LDP's proposed policies on the residential property development sector and broader market areas and the preparation of technical responses to consultation comments submitted in relation to the Housing Growth Options Report.

4.0 Main Issues

Consultation on the dPS and next stage in the LDP process

- 4.1** The 109 representations received in response to the dPS consultation were published on the Council's website on 1st March 2019, with an opportunity for the submission of counter-representations during an eight week consultation period to 26th April 2019. In accordance with the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations, counter representations were invited in relation to a site specific policy comments. In total, 63 counter-representations were received from 14 stakeholders in relation 14 different policies referenced in 26 of the original representations.
- 4.2** The Council is required to publish these counter-representations as soon as reasonably practical and prior to submission of the dPS to the Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) in anticipation of an Independent Examination (IE) being proposed. The representations and counter-representations will be taken into account as part of this IE process and it is intended that the submission of documents will take place during the Summer 2019. The purposes of the IE will be to determine the soundness of the dPS. Soundness relates to how the dPS has been produced, how it has taken account of regional policy and its coherence, consistency and effectiveness.
- 4.3** Following the IE convened by the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC), an Advisory Report of their findings will be issued to Dfi, which will then issue a binding report to the Council. This Dfi report can require that the dPS be adopted as originally prepared, or with modifications. Through formal adoption and publication by the Council, the dPS will become a primary consideration when determining future planning applications for development in the city.

Housing Land Availability Summary Report for the 2018/19 monitoring period

- 4.4** The Planning Act (NI) 2011 will require the Council to produce annual reports for Dfi outlining the extent to which the objectives set out in the LDP are being achieved. As the Council is currently preparing the first LDP for Belfast under this new legislation, the production of Annual Monitoring Reports has not formerly commenced. However, to inform and provide evidence for the plan, annual Housing Land

Availability Monitor Reports (referred to as the 'Housing Monitor' reports) are prepared by the Council.

- 4.5** The primary purpose of the Housing Monitor is to inform the formulation of the Council's new LDP and monitor the performance of policies. As an ongoing information resource it will also help the Council identify where a shortfall in potential land supply might exist and can inform the development sector on the availability of land that may be suitable for housing.
- 4.6** The Housing Land Availability Summary Report for 2018/19 presents the headline figures from a register of potential housing land maintained by the Council, based on current planning policy designations and planning permissions. This provides a snapshot of the amount of land available for new homes and capacity for future housing units as of 1st April 2019, as well as providing the net gains in housing units for the 2018/19 period. This differs from the new dwelling completion statistics published routinely by central Government which only provide a total for new build homes, without accounting for units lost as a result of redevelopment.
- 4.7** This information is summarised within the report in relation to:
- Each settlement within the District, including settlement areas in the case of Belfast City;
 - Whether land falls within the existing urban footprint or is classified as greenfield land; and
 - The type of land use zoning (i.e. land zoned for housing or land zoned for mixed use development) or all other land.
- 4.8** During the 2018/19 monitoring year 830 units were completed on 20.9 ha of land across the District. 398.6 ha of land remains, with potential capacity for 22,074 residential units. The total number of dwellings completed in the district has increased by 25.9% from 659 in 2017/18 to 830 in the current monitor year. The proportion of dwellings completed within the Urban Footprint is recorded at 84.1% and, as at 1st April 2019, almost 40% of the remaining potential available for future dwellings is on land zoned for housing or mixed use development.
- 4.9** It is emphasised that the monitor represents a register of housing land based on current policy designations and planning permissions, rather than an accurate picture of

viable housing land. It is the role of an Urban Capacity Study (UCS) to assess the suitability, availability and achievability of land, alongside the identification of new sites that could be later zoned for residential use as part of the LDP process. An UCS was last completed in March 2018 and was formerly published as part of the dPS evidence base in Autumn last year.

- 4.10 As part of the ongoing work to make information more accessible, the Housing Monitor report will be published alongside an online map portal showing the status of the existing housing monitor sites and key information contained within the tables of the report, for example: the site area developed and the remaining area potential; the number of dwelling units complete and the remaining unit potential.

Additional background research

- 4.11 As part of the evidence base to inform the LDP, consultants were appointed to undertake a detailed study of the future population and housing growth potential for Belfast. The Housing Growth Options Report (October 2016), and subsequent Addendum (December 2017) provided additional detail on the mix of size and type of housing associated with the preferred growth scenario and were published alongside the dPS as part of the evidence base. A number of submissions submitted in response to the dPS consultation related to this Housing Growth Options Report and the level of growth proposed within that report.
- 4.12 To ensure the LDP evidence base is comprehensive and maintained during the process, updated technical responses to the comments received have been developed. This work will ensure the robustness of the underlying evidence is maintained through technical clarifications and is intended to supplement the existing work to further inform the LDP as it moves through the IE process.
- 4.13 Alongside this work to maintain the LDP evidence base and inform the Council's responses to consultations, further studies were completed with the support of external expertise in 2018 to provide a high level assessment of potential market impacts from emerging housing policies across different sectors of the City. This latest report makes recommendations to help maximise opportunities and minimise any potentially adverse impacts and concludes that, notwithstanding reservations about the application of the LDP to the City Centre core, there is no overriding impediment to the draft policies set out in the dPS

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

contributing to the supply of affordable housing in Belfast. Whilst there are geographic differences in the impacts and potential going forward, it suggests that some new affordable housing products should be prioritised to encourage uptake. A copy of the final report is available on modern.gov."

The Committee noted the update which had been provided.

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)

Applications Withdrawn

The Committee noted that the following three items (8d, e and f) had been withdrawn from the agenda:

- LA04/2019/0081/F - 12 apartments (social/affordable housing units comprising 3No. one bed & 9No. two bed) with provision of community pocket park, car parking, landscaping and all associated site and access works, lands at former Maple Leaf Club, 41-43 Park Avenue;
- LA04/2019/0082/F - Section 54 application to remove condition 2 of Z/2010/0434/F. The condition reads as follows, "No part of the residential development hereby permitted shall be commenced until the social club hereby approved is constructed and operational in accordance with the approved plans."; and
- LA04/2019/0083/F - Section 54 application to remove condition 2 of LA04/2015/0075/F - "No part of the residential development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the social club hereby approved is constructed and operational on lands at former Maple Leaf Club, 41-43 Park Avenue.

LA04/2016/2359/F & LA/2016/2341/DCA - Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 7 storey office building with retail unit on ground floor at 46-52 Upper Queen Street and 11a Wellington Street

The Planning Manager (Development Management) advised that the Planning Committee had previously undertaken a visit to the site and had subsequently considered the two applications, where it had agreed with the officers recommendations to approve both at its meeting on 15th May, 2018. However, he explained that, following pre-action correspondence for a Judicial Review of the decisions for failure to specifically cite Planning Policies BH14 and BH10 of PPS6 in the report, the Council had since agreed to have those decisions quashed.

He provided the Committee with the detail of the applications.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items Pack, where Ulster Architectural Heritage (UAH) had submitted further objections to the application. The Planning Manager highlighted to the Committee the Planning Department's response to each of the points raised by UAH.

The Committee was advised of the Conservation Assessment Report which had been submitted with the application, the independent urban design advice which had been commissioned by the Council, and the views of the Conservation Officers.

In relation to criteria (a) and (b) under paragraph 6.5 of PPS6, the Planning Manager pointed out that the Conservation Assessment Report and both Conservation officers' assessments had referred to the fact that the buildings had lost a significant extent of their original fabric/features including chimneys, roof materials, original window frames, with the ground floors having been reorganised, including having had shopfronts installed. He explained that, therefore, it was considered that there were no physical features present that contributed to significant character.

The Committee was also advised that the Historic Environment Division (HED) Built Heritage had advised that the site and buildings were not listed at the time of its heritage survey in 2012-2013, that they were not considered to be of sufficient architectural and/or historical interest to merit a full survey and that it would not be revisiting that decision.

The Planning Manager advised the Members that the buildings were surrounded by larger modern buildings, were subject to limited views within the Conservation Area save from within Upper Queen Street and Wellington Street. He stated that the visual influence/impact of the existing building would be limited in terms of the Conservation Area as a whole as stipulated in PPS6.

In relation to the proposal, the Committee was apprised of the primary considerations, which were set out in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland and of PPS6 and were considered acceptable in terms of scale, form and massing.

The Committee noted that no objections had been received from any consultees including Transport NI, Environmental Health, DAERA or HED.

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.

LA04/2018/2470/O, LA04/2018/2464/F, LA04/2018/2445/LBC – Mixed use regeneration and development of vacant surface level car park and refurbishment of existing listed Butchers building, with erection of new fixed use buildings (heights varying between 3-9 storeys). Proposal to comprise basement level car parking, ground floor retail/restaurant/coffee shop/workspace uses, with Grade A and SME offices above. Provision of new pedestrian accesses from Gresham and Winetavern Street; associated

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

public realm, landscaping, associated plant, and all site and access works on vacant lands at existing level Carpark bounded by Winetavern Street, Gresham Street and North Street.

(Cllr Hussey declared an interest in this item, in that he had taken part in a site visit to the area as a Member of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, but he clarified that he had not made any predetermination in relation to the proposed development and so he remained in the room)

The Case officer outlined the principal aspects of the major application to the Committee.

He explained that the application sought outline permission for a mixed use regeneration and development of a surface level car park, the refurbishment of an existing listed Butchers building, and the erection of new fixed use buildings with heights varying between three and nine storeys.

The Members were advised of the key issues which had been used in the assessment of the proposed development, which included, amongst others, the principle of development, the principle of proposed uses, impact on built heritage, scale, massing, design, traffic and parking and drainage and flooding.

The case officer explained that the site lay within the northern part of the city centre, which was poorly defined in terms of land use and built form. He advised the Committee that it was zoned as an opportunity site in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) and that the proposal would renovate a listed three-storey building, develop an surface level carpark with a piece of high quality architecture which drew upon the industrial heritage of the area, creating a well-defined public space and providing a landmark building on one of the main arterial routes into the city centre.

The case officer drew the Committee's attention to the Late Items Pack, where he highlighted that a consultation response had been received from the City Regeneration and Development Team. He outlined the Planning Department's response to the issues raised.

He outlined that DfI Roads, Rivers Agency, Belfast City Airport, and Building Control had no objections to the proposals, and that no third party representations had been received. The Members noted that further information had been requested from Environmental Health and the DAERA Waste Management Unit.

The Committee was advised that an objection had been received from the Historic Environment Division (HED). One of its primary concerns was that it felt that the link block extension to the listed building was too narrow. The case officer explained that a response from HED was outstanding in relation to the most recent plans but that it was likely that its objections remained. He explained, therefore, that given the objection by a statutory consultee, if the Committee was to grant approval to the application, it would be referred to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI).

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

The Committee was advised that Mr. T. Stokes, Mr. A. Stewart and Mr. S. Tyler were in attendance, representing the agent/applicant, and they were welcomed to the meeting by the Chairperson.

Mr. Stokes requested that the Committee support the applications due to the undernoted reasons:

- they had undertaken a significant community consultation exercise over and above the statutory requirements, resulting in no objections from third parties;
- they had held a four day public event, where meetings were held with cultural and community groups, business owners and residents in the area;
- the proposed development was a high quality proposal to bring life back into a brown field site, including the refurbishment of the listed Butchers building;
- new pedestrian links through the site with a new public space on site; and
- during construction the proposals would create 600 jobs.

In response to a number of Members' questions, the case officer provided clarity in relation to the proposed two phases of construction and HED Historic Monuments' access to the site during construction.

In response to a further Member's question, the case officer advised the Committee that draft BMAP 2015, as a material planning consideration, set out a number of Urban Design Criteria for the Old City Character Area, one of which related to building heights. He explained to the Members that the Gresham Street block had 5 storeys, the North Street block had 6 storeys, and Winetavern Street had 9 storeys. The Committee was advised that the heights had been informed by a robust conceptual approach on what was a development opportunity site on a key arterial route into the city centre.

The Director of Planning and Building Control advised the Members that the remit of HED was focused solely on protecting the historic environment. He explained that the Planning Department's role was to strike the balance between protecting historic buildings and ensuring that a level of development continued throughout the city.

The Case officer's recommendations, as outlined in the report, were put to the Committee, namely:

That the Committee approves the applications for outline, full and Listed Building Consent, subject to the imposing of the conditions as outlined in the report, with delegated authority to be given to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the conditions, subject to notification to the DfI and to agree the details of the gable elevation with HED.

On a vote by show of hands, eleven Members voted for the proposal and three against and it was declared carried.

**LA04/2018/2081/F - Change of use from Parish Hall to
licensed social club , St Agnes' Parish Hall,
146 Andersonstown Road**

The Case officer presented to the Committee the principal aspects of an application for the change of use from a parish hall to a licensed social club.

She outlined the key issues which had been considered in the assessment of the application, including the principle of the proposed development and change of use, the design, scale and massing, the noise impact assessment and impact on residential amenity, amongst others. She clarified to the Members that licensing was not within the remit of the Planning authority.

The Case officer advised the Committee that Environmental Health had recommended a number of conditions in response to the Noise Impact Assessment and further information provided by the applicant. She outlined that the Planning Department's consideration of those conditions was outlined within the report.

The Members were advised that the principle of the proposed use was considered unacceptable and inconsistent with the existing residential area and, if permitted, would result in a detrimental impact to the residential amenity of the adjacent properties. The Committee was also advised that the separation distances between the parish hall and the existing neighbouring properties were insufficient to adequately allow the use of the hall as a social club without detrimental impact.

The Committee was advised that 40 objections had been received from local residents, raising concerns in respect of the impact of the proposal on residential amenity by way of noise, disturbance and general nuisance.

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items Pack, where a letter of support had been received from the intended occupier.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. G. McLarnon and Dr. E. Barrett to the meeting, who were objecting to the application. Together, they stated that:

- there were a number of houses very close to the parish hall and that it would be unsuitable if it were to become a social club, with noise late at night;
- there was inadequate space around the footprint of the building;
- there was only one shared entrance; and
- there would be significant noise disturbances from deliveries and from patrons loitering and smoking outside of the building.

The Committee agreed to refuse the application, with authority delegated to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the wording of the final reasons for refusal.

LA04/2018/0618/F - 49 houses, landscaping and associated site works Vacant site bounded by First Street North Howard Street Third Street and Conway Street

The Committee was apprised of the details of the application for 48 terraced dwellings and 1 detached dwelling, with each dwelling to have a car parking space.

The case officer provided the Members with the key issues in the assessment of the application, including, amongst others, the principle of development and use, height, scale, massing, layout and design and the provision of amenity space.

She explained to the Committee that the adopted Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 had designated the site as unzoned white land, while the Draft BMAP 2015, which was ultimately quashed, and BMAP 2004 had designated the site as zoned housing land.

The Members were advised that the proposed density was in keeping with the existing established residential area, the layout was deemed acceptable in that the proposal provided private garden areas to all 49 dwellings and the provision of amenity space within the development was also considered acceptable.

The Committee was advised that no representations had been received and that no objections had been received from consultees, subject to conditions.

In response to Members' questions regarding the separation distances between dwellings, the case officer confirmed that they were deemed acceptable and were similar to the surrounding houses.

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.

(The Committee adjourned for a ten minute break at this point)

LA04/2018/1886/F & LA04/2018/1773/LBC - Refurbishment and improvements to existing Grade B1 Listed (ref. HB/26/33/004) former school comprising main school building, two free standing pavilions and site works. Works to include restoration, reconstruction, minor demolitions and extension to support community based uses at St Comgall's Primary School Divis Street

The case officer detailed the principal aspects of the report.

She highlighted to the Committee that the applicant was in receipt of £3.5million from the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF) from the Council, and that the Council was delivering the project.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

The Committee noted that the site was a vacant former Primary School, which was a Grade B1 listed building and was identified on the Built Heritage at Risk Northern Ireland register.

The Members were advised of the key issues in the assessment of the proposed development, which included, amongst others, the proposed design, layout, scale and massing, the impact on a listed building, impact on the character of an area and the impact on traffic and parking provision.

The case officer advised the Members that no objections had been received and that the Historic Environment Division (HED), following the submission of amendments and subject to conditions, had no objections.

The Committee granted approval to the application and the Listed Building Consent, 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.

LA04/2018/1761/RM - Site for new dwelling and garage to the rear of 598 Antrim Road

The case officer explained the principal aspects of the application to the Committee.

She highlighted to the Members that it was a reserved matters application and that the principle of a dwelling on the site had already been established under the outline permission LA04/2017/1208/O in September 2017 and that the current application was to deal solely with the conditions attached to that approval.

The Members were advised that the outline permission included conditions to specify the siting of the proposed dwelling, the ridge height of the dwelling, to be no higher than that of the neighbouring properties at Nos. 9 and 11 Waterloo Park North, and that the boundary hedging was to be retained. The case officer confirmed to the Committee that the Reserved Matters application complied with those conditions.

The Committee was advised that 23 objections had been received. The case officer explained that no objections had been received from consultees.

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items Pack, where a further objection had been received. The case officer explained that the Planning Department's responses to the issues raised were contained in the report.

The Committee was advised that two objectors to the application, Mr. L. Quinn and Ms. M Magill, were in attendance and they were welcomed to the meeting.

They raised a number of points in objection to the application, including:

- the affect that the proposals would have on the value of their properties;

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

- the impact that the proposal would have on them and their properties in relation to issues regarding the dormer windows in the attic and the altered roof design; and
- a request that the Committee would defer consideration in order to undertake a site visit.

The Committee was advised that Mr. S. Houston, the agent for the application, was in attendance and he was welcomed to the meeting.

Mr Houston explained that the Reserved Matters application complied with the conditions and that the proposed design was in keeping with the surrounding area.

Proposal

Moved by Alderman Rodgers
Seconded by Councillor Nicholl and

Resolved – that the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the application to enable a site visit to be undertaken to allow the Committee to acquaint itself with the location and the proposals at first hand.

**LA04/2017/0733/F - 4 storey building (14 no. apartments:
10no. 2 bed 3 person & 4no. 1 bed 2 person apartments
205-211 Crumlin Road**

The Committee was apprised of the principal aspects of the application for fourteen apartments over four storeys, with four and half storeys to the front elevation.

The case officer advised the Committee that the site had been vacant for almost a decade. She explained that the site was unzoned white land in the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 and that it was partly unzoned white land and partly zoned as a shopping and commercial area on an Arterial Route in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015.

The Members were advised of the key issues in the assessment of the proposed development, which included, amongst others, the principle of development, height, scale, massing, layout and design, parking provision and access and the impact on the character of the area.

The case officer explained that the proposed design was larger in scale than some of the surrounding buildings but that the arterial frontage had changed and was transitioning from the former domestic scale buildings to more commercial proportions and scale. She added that the detailing proposed in the design would assist in integrating the development with the smaller scale residential properties to the rear.

The Committee was advised that 35 representations had been received, citing design, scale and massing, dominance, and parking provision. The case officer advised the Members that the design had been amended to address a number of the concerns and that the Planning Service had only received three objections to the latest proposals.

The Members' attention was drawn to the Late Items Pack, where the Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) had indicated that it was content with the proposed development.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

The Committee noted that Environmental Health, Rivers Agency, NI Water, Historic Environment Division, transport NI and the Council's Urban Design officer had no objection to the proposals subject to the conditions as outlined within the report.

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.

LA04/2019/0356/F - Reconfiguration of Block A of LA04/2016/2291/RM, to provide 12No. apartments from previously approved 8, & associated adjustment's to approved elevations and site layout Former Dundela FC Training Ground opposite 25-45 Dundela Avenue

The case officer explained the principal aspects of the application which included the reconfiguration of apartments from a Reserved Matters application, LA04/2016/2291/RM, to provide an increase to twelve apartments from the previously approved eight.

She explained to the Members that the principle of residential use at the location had already been established.

The Committee was advised that Environmental Health, DfI Roads, NI Water, Rivers Agency and NIEA had no objections.

The case officer added that three representations had been received, raising concerns with an increase in density, parking, privacy of residents and concerns on infrastructure. She explained that the issues had been dealt with within her report.

The case officer explained that the overall design would remain in keeping with its surrounding context and it was considered that the proposed design and architectural treatment were acceptable and in line with policy requirements.

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.

LA04/2018/2603/F and LA04/2018/2611/LBC - Restoration and refurbishment of the existing building with minor demolition at the rear and internal alterations to provide existing pool and heritage/interpretative facility with a new extension which will provide new 25m 6-lane pool with spectator gallery, wet and dry change, spa and expanded gym facility and car parking at Templemore Baths, Templemore Avenue

The Case officer apprised the Committee of the major application for the restoration and refurbishment of a Category B1 Listed Building, Templemore Baths, and for an extension on the adjacent vacant site.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

He highlighted to the Members that Belfast City Council was the applicant.

The Committee was advised that the baths were located within the Templemore Avenue Area of Townscape Character in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) and that it was the only surviving baths in the UK still being used for its original purpose.

The case officer outlined to the Members that all consultees were content with the proposals subject to conditions as detailed within the report.

A Member requested clarity on the historic steps and tiles within the baths. The case officer clarified to the Committee that these would be preserved. He explained that the Historic Environment Division (HED) had advised that they were content that the proposals were compliant with planning policy.

The Members were advised that no third party objections had been received.

The Committee granted approval to the application and to the Listed Building Consent, 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.

LA04/2019/0417/F - Purpose built managed student accommodation (PBMSA) with 251 beds comprised of 219 cluster beds and 32 studio flats, shared communal facilities reception/management suite, retail/café unit fronting Botanic Avenue Botanic Link land created over the Belfast/Dublin railway line between University Road and Botanic Avenue

(Councillor Groogan declared an interest in this item and left the meeting for the duration of the item.)

The Case officer provided the Committee with the principal aspects of the application which proposed the construction of a four storey building on the raised platform above the railway line between University Road and Botanic Avenue.

She outlined the key issues which had been considered during assessment of the proposals which included the principle of Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA) at the location, compliance with the HMO subject Plan and PBMSA Guidance Document, design, scale, massing and layout and impact on the conservation area and listed buildings.

The Case officer explained that the proposal was a compatible land use which did not conflict with relevant policy and other material considerations.

The Committee was advised that consultation had been undertaken with DfI Roads Service, Historic Environment (HED), NI Water, Environmental health, NI Transport Holding Company (NITHC), Rivers Agency, Building Control and the Urban Design and Conservation officers.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

The Case officer explained that HED had raised one concern regarding the University Avenue elevation however it had informally advised that the amended plans had addressed their concerns.

She informed the Committee that NITHC had raised a number of stipulations and that officers considered them to be civil matters between two landowners and that they could be addressed as informatives.

The Committee was advised that all other consultees had responded with no objections, subject to conditions and informatives.

The Case officer explained that a robust Pre-Application Discussion (PAD) for the application had taken place, where the design and other relevant matters had been addressed in detail.

As the proposal was located within the Queens Conservation Area, was adjacent to two Areas of Townscape Character and was in the close proximity of a number of listed buildings, the Committee was shown a number of computer generated images demonstrating the view of the proposed development from various key viewpoints.

The Committee was advised that a Section 76 Planning Agreement had been submitted by the developer and which was under consideration by the Council's Legal Services section.

The Case officer drew the Committee's attention to the Late Items Pack, where responses from the City Regeneration and Development Team and HED had been received. She also advised that five letters of representation had not been considered before publication of the Committee report and that the issues raised therein had either already been considered in the report or were civil matters. The Members also noted that the landscape plans had been amended to rectify a discrepancy in relation to proposed planting on the right of way.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. M. Gordon and Mr. A. Best, representing the applicant/agent, to the meeting.

In response to a Member's question regarding the balconies on the adjoining Bingo Hall on Botanic Avenue potentially causing an overlooking issue to the proposed development, Mr. Best advised the Committee that the balconies were originally installed for patrons of the business who smoked, but that they were no longer used. The Case officer advised the Committee that the floorplans illustrated that the area concerned would predominantly be used as a circulation area within the building, and that the windows would face onto Botanic Avenue.

A further Member queried how planners would ensure that the materials were appropriate to the listed buildings. In response, the case officer advised the Members that they had gone through a number of design iterations to achieve more appropriate materials and, furthermore, there was a condition requiring a sample panel to be constructed and maintained on the site so that the materials could be seen in context and that it would be required to be discharged prior to construction.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

A Member asked whether NI Rail had received the necessary structural assurances which were to be signed off by a chartered civil engineer. Mr. Best confirmed that they had met with Translink every few weeks in relation to the Development Management Plans and that, to date, two inspections of the internal tunnel had taken place with Translink representatives, as well as testing of the concrete, chemical testing and structural road testing.

The Case officer confirmed to the Members that these were civil matters and that Building Control would also be heavily involved given the location of the development.

The Committee approved the application and, in accordance with Section 76 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2015, delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control, in conjunction with the City Solicitor, to enter into discussions with the applicant to explore the scope of any planning agreements which might be realised at the site. The Committee also delegated power to the Director of Planning and Building Control for the final wording of the conditions.

LA04/2018/1755/F - Greenfield site with the former Ulidia Primary School to be demolished to allow for a new 7 classroom primary school, with two classroom LSU and single unit nursery Ulidia Site (formally Ulidia Primary) Somerset Street

The case officer provided the Committee with the key aspects of the application for the demolition of the existing buildings on the site of Ulidia Resource Centre and the erection of a new seven classroom, two storey Irish Medium school to include parking facilities, landscaping and open space.

She outlined that the key issues in the assessment of the application were the principle of a school at the location, the visual impact of the proposed redevelopment, the impact on amenity/character of the area, the impact on transport and other infrastructure and flood risk.

The Members were advised that the principle of a school on the site was acceptable given that the existing buildings were previously used as a primary school. The case officer also explained that the design, scale and massing were acceptable.

The Committee was advised that DfI Roads, Environmental Health, NI Water and Rivers Agency had been consulted on the proposed development and had no objections, subject to conditions and informatives.

The case officer explained that two objections had been received from nearby residents citing concerns relating to traffic, access, whether there was a need for another primary school, appropriateness of the proposal within a residential context, asbestos contamination and noise pollution. She explained the Planning Department's response to the concerns were addressed within the report.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 11th June, 2019**

She drew the Committee's attention to the Late Items Report and explained that, due to a clerical error, incorrect neighbour notifications had been included within the original report.

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

Planning Committee

Thursday, 13th June, 2019

MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Carson (Chairperson);
Alderman Rodgers; and
Councillors Brooks, Canavan, Collins,
Garrett, Groogan, Hussey, McMullan,
Murphy, Nicholl and Pankhurst.

In attendance: Mr J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and
Building Control;
Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development
Management); and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported from Councillors McKeown and O'Hara.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Proposed Changes to the Fees for Property Certificates

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

The purpose of the report is to seek the Committee's agreement to increasing the fee charged for a Regional Property Certificate and to review the fee charged for Council Property Certificates.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Agree to a revised fee structure for Regional Property Certificates;**
- **Note the knock on administrative arrangements;**

- Agree to a review of the fee charged for the Council property certificates to take account of inflationary rises.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

There are two Property Certificate services assisting the conveyancing process in NI. The Council Property Certificate (CPC) service is provided by individual councils and gathers information from internal council services in response to a property enquiry from a solicitor usually acting on behalf of a vendor. In 2018-19 the CPC service generated approximately £395k for Belfast City Council (BCC).

3.2 In April 2015, as an outcome of Local Government Reform, the Regional Property Certificate (RPC) service was transferred from the then Department of Environment to councils and by agreement was set up as a shared service operated by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (FODC).

3.3 The RPC provides information on a property or land relating to inter alia Planning Service, Roads Service, Water Service, Built and Natural Heritage and Rivers Agency, in response to a request from a solicitor usually acting on behalf of a vendee. In 2017-18 the RPC generated a fee income for BCC of approximately £253k. This income is returned to BCC by FODC on a 6 monthly basis.

3.4 Key Issues

Following a detailed review by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) on the VAT treatment of the fee income for a Regional Property Certificate (RPC), which included lengthy correspondence and significant challenge by local government and its VAT and legal advisors, HMRC has decided from 1 July 2019 the RPC fee income is liable to VAT (20%).

3.5 Consequently, and because the fee income for an RPC has not increased since 1 April 2014, FODC has proposed that the fee for a single property Certificate is increased from £42.50 to £60 with corresponding increases for additional enquiries. This increase takes account of VAT payable, inflation between April 2014 and 2019, and additional administrative costs due to VAT. (See Point 3.6 below). A detailed breakdown of the increase is provided in Appendix A.

3.6 Subject to the approval of the revised fee it will be necessary to update and agree the Service Level Agreement with FODC. Additionally, to allow each council to properly account for VAT to HMRC, FODC will return the fee income to BCC on a monthly basis.

3.7 As the fee for the CPC has not been increased since 2004, to take account of inflationary changes, it is also proposed that the fee charged for the CPC is also increased. This would be agreed consultation with the other councils.

3.8 Financial & Resource Implications

As the proposed increase is related to VAT, the administration of this and inflationary increase there are no significant finance and resource implications.

3.9 Equality or Good Relations Implications

None associated with this report.”

Appendix A

Proposed Fee Structure for Regional Property Certificate

Standard Fee

Fee at transfer	£42.50
Inflation (April 2014- March 2019)	£4.06
Additional Admin costs re VAT	£3.44
Total proposed fee excluding VAT	£50.00
VAT@ 20%	£10.00
Total proposed fee	£60.00

More than one property/site/parcel of land – additional £7 (including VAT) for each additional enquiry
Maximum fee - £265 (Including VAT)”.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Planning Applications

THE COMMITTEE DEALT WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEM IN PURSUANCE OF THE POWERS DELEGATED TO IT BY THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING ORDER 37(e)

LA04/2018/0811/O - Mixed use development comprising offices, residential apartments (including affordable), hotel and serviced apartments, retail and professional services, community and

**Planning Committee,
Thursday, 13th June, 2019**

cultural, leisure uses, cafes, bars, restaurants, with associated car parking, circulation and servicing arrangements; public realm works, landscaping, replacement of existing pedestrian bridge fixed to railway bridge and associated access works to Short Strand and Bridge End with other infrastructural works, and demolition of existing structures including boundary walls on lands at former Sirocco Works Short Strand and adjacent to Bridge End and the River Lagan

The Planning Manager (Development Management) reminded the Committee that a site visit to the former Sirocco works and the surrounding area had taken place on 31st May.

He drew the Committee's attention to the Late Items Pack, where a response from the Council's City Regeneration and Development team had been received. He outlined the Planning Department's response to the issues raised. He also explained that further consultation responses had been received from statutory agencies and that no objections had been received from NI Water, Environmental Health or from DfI Roads, subject to conditions and informatives.

The case officer presented the detail of the outline major planning application for the mixed-use development on the site. He explained that the means of access to the site was to be determined and that the proposals included a replacement pedestrian and cycle bridge over the River Lagan to the south.

The case officer explained that the key issues in the assessment of the proposal included, amongst others, the principle of the proposal at the location, environmental impacts, economic development, layout, scale, massing, the impact on amenity and on natural and built heritage assets, the impact of the proposed development on transport and infrastructure and flooding and drainage impacts.

He outlined the planning history of the site, which had been cleared since 1999. He explained that, in March 2011, under Z/2008/0599/O, a mixed use redevelopment of the site had been granted permission. The Committee was advised that it had been subject to a ten year time condition and was therefore extant.

The Committee was reminded that, in August 2018, it had granted approval to a full application for Block C, for the erection of a thirteen storey Grade A office building on the site, including deck and basement parking, ground floor café/bar/restaurant uses, a temporary pocket park and a pedestrian and cycle access route from Bridge End. The case officer explained that the application site formed part of the outline application site and was to be approved following resolution of outstanding issues by the applicant and the completion of a Section 76 Planning Agreement.

The case officer advised the Members that the site was located outside of the City Centre in the Belfast Urban Area Plan (BUAP). He explained that it fell within the City Centre boundary in both versions of draft BMAP, where the uses proposed by the outline application were broadly acceptable. The City Solicitor clarified the planning status of draft BMAP 2015 and explained that, while it had been quashed, substantial weight

**Planning Committee,
Thursday, 13th June, 2019**

should be given to it given the advanced stage it had reached. The case officer added that significant weight should also be given to the extant permission for redevelopment for the majority of the uses proposed in the outline application and also towards the full application for office development on a portion of the site which the Committee had resolved to approve.

The Committee was advised that the application was supported by a Concept Masterplan and parameters plan which demonstrated the broad locations of the fifteen buildings and their maximum heights. The case officer presented a number of visuals demonstrating the varying heights of the blocks. He pointed out that Block C would be the tallest block on the site, at 13 storeys, with the number of storeys decreasing as it reached the river edge to respond to micro-climatic considerations such as daylight, wind and acoustics. The Members were advised that other blocks on the site would predominantly consist of between five and eight storeys, with Block N at the riverfront varying between one and six storeys.

In order to mitigate against flood risk, the Committee was advised that the developer proposed to infill the site to a level of 4.2metres ordinance datum (OD) to ensure that the current level of protection afforded to the site would be maintained.

The Committee noted that the proposal included 675 residential units, 20% of which would be affordable housing. The Members were advised that half of the affordable housing would be social housing and that the NI Housing Executive (NIHE) were supportive of the scheme.

The case officer outlined that archaeological excavations had uncovered substantial industrial archaeological remains from the north eastern corner of the site. In addition, he advised that a red brick chimney along the river's edge was scheduled for protection and would be retained. The Committee noted that the Historic Environment Division (HED) had no objections to the scheme subject to conditions.

The Members were apprised of details relating to separation distances between each block on the site and in relation to existing buildings.

The Committee was advised of the community consultation which had taken place, including the Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) which had been submitted in June 2017. The case officer explained that the Pre-application Community Consultation Report submitted with the application had demonstrated that the applicant had carried out their duty under Section 27 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

The Members were advised that two letters of objection had been received, raising concerns that the proposals would provide an overprovision of facilities for traffic as opposed to sustainable transport, issues relating to pollution and impact on air quality and that it was important that housing on the site should not result in "enclaving". The case officer added that a letter of support had been submitted by the Belfast Civic Trust.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. J. Osborne, the applicant, Mr M. Gordon, the agent, and Mr. L. Westergaard, Architect, to the meeting. Together they advised the Committee that they had invested over £20million in the site to date, that major

**Planning Committee,
Thursday, 13th June, 2019**

investors were ready to invest in the site if planning permission was granted, and asked that the Committee grant approval to the application.

In response to a Member's question, the case officer outlined to the Members that the applicant had provided a socio-economic assessment as part of the Environmental Statement. He highlighted that it indicated that the development would be worth approximately £400million, with 875 full time construction jobs being created and accommodation for approximately 1,570 residents. The Committee was advised that the socio-economic aspects had been assessed by the Council's Economic Development Unit who had identified labour and skills shortages within the local labour market. The case officer highlighted that interventions were being pursued as part of the Section 76 Planning Agreement.

In relation to a Member's question regarding the location of the social housing units in the scheme, Mr. Osborne explained that he had chosen a waterfront location for the social housing. A number of Members stated that they were pleased with this choice of location.

A further Member expressed concern that the proposals included only 10% social housing and that they felt there should be more. The Planning Manager (Development Management) explained that, under current Planning Policy, 10% was adequate and that the Planning Department welcomed that 20% of the units would be affordable housing overall.

In relation to green space and cycling infrastructure on the site, Mr. Westergaard provided the Committee with details of the linear park, the green podium area and the cycle and pedestrian routes through the site, which included a riverfront promenade.

The officers' recommendation to approve the proposals, with authority delegated to the City Solicitor and the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the Section 76 Planning Agreements, and authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise conditions and any outstanding issues was put the Committee. On a vote by show of hands, eleven Members voted for the proposal and one against, and it was declared carried.

Chairperson

Brexit Committee

Thursday, 20th June, 2019

MEETING OF BREXIT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor de Faoite (Chairperson);
Aldermen Haire and Rodgers; and
Councillors D. Baker, Brooks, Canavan, Michael Collins,
Flynn, Hanvey, Hutchinson, Long, McAteer, McLaughlin,
Newton and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Ms. G. Long, Commissioner for Resilience;
Ms. K. Walsh, Business, Research and Development
Manager; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors Magennis, McAllister and McKeown.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 11th April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 29th April.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Schedule of Meetings

The Committee approved the following schedule of meetings for the remainder of 2019 and agreed that meetings should, in future, commence at 5.15 p.m.:

- Thursday, 22nd August;
- Thursday, 12th September;
- Thursday, 10th October;
- Thursday, 21st November; and
- Thursday, 5th December.

Update on Brexit Committee Activity

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

The purpose of this report is to outline for Members the role of the Brexit Committee, the work that it previously undertook and preparations that are ongoing in relation to the Council’s Day 1 preparedness.

2.0 Recommendation

The Committee is requested to note this update.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

Members are reminded that the Brexit Committee held its first meeting in August, 2018 and is responsible for researching, monitoring and reviewing the financial, resource or operational impact upon the Council and the district as a result of the UK’s decision to leave the European Union. The Committee is responsible for making recommendations to Council on such issues (or to the relevant Standing Committee where appropriate).

The Committee’s specific functions include:

- articulating the Belfast specific issues to be considered as part of the negotiation and transition arrangements;**
- the continuous monitoring of progress and announcements around Brexit;**
- influencing and contributing to regional considerations of the implications of Brexit on both the work of the Council and on the district;**
- identifying any actions the Council may take to mitigate any adverse impacts arising and capitalising on any opportunities as a result of Brexit;**
- reviewing changes to legislation arising out of Brexit and analysing the likely impact which they may have upon the delivery of council services;**
- fostering and maintaining positive relations and cultural links with the EU;**

**Brexit Committee,
Thursday, 20th June, 2019**

- **maintaining and promoting social cohesion within the district, post Brexit;**
- **monitoring the impact on migrant workers, skills gaps and issues arising with regard to various sectors in the labour market;**
- **financial and budget assumptions and implications for the district arising out of Brexit;**
- **identifying the implications for EU grant funding and alternative funding opportunities;**
- **seeking to influence decisions with regard to continuing access to and distribution of EU funds (including Peace, Culture and Interreg programmes);**
- **ensuring the ability of Belfast to achieve the objectives, as set out within the Belfast Agenda;**
- **ensuring the ability of Belfast to continue to attract and retain investment and grow the rate base;**
- **ensuring the ability of Belfast to increase trade with existing and potential trade partners (access to supply chains / import and export issues); and**
- **hearing evidence from other parties.**

Activities to Date

In the period from its establishment to the end of the last Council term, the Committee has considered a number of issues including:

- **potential impact of increased controls on the Port Health Unit (a site visit was undertaken to the Port);**
- **technical notices issued by the UK government;**
- **EU Settlement Scheme;**
- **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 following the UK's departure from the European Union;**
- **Day 1 preparedness of the Council;**
- **potential impacts of Brexit on a range of sectors across the City – this involved the holding of an external workshop to seek their views;**

**Brexit Committee,
Thursday, 20th June, 2019**

- scenario planning around how the Council can input into the new structures which will be established as part of UK Withdrawal and Next Phase of Negotiations, which included input from Queens University Belfast; and
- potential implications of Brexit on ICC and Ulster Hall.

The Committee has also received presentations from:

- CBI (Confederation of British Industry) Northern Ireland - analysis on the work they have undertaken on NI migration;
- InterTrade Ireland – on support available for business;
- Invest NI – on support available for business;
- BCC Youth Forum and other youth bodies; and
- Federation of Small Businesses - Making Northern Ireland an Enhanced Economic Zone

Visit to Brussels

A delegation, led by the Lord Mayor, undertook a visit to Brussels in January, 2019. The purpose of this visit was 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 also hosted a visit from the Seanad Select Committee on the Withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union in March.

Update on Brexit Day 1 Preparedness

Members may be aware that that the previous Committee was updated at various meetings on the work that is ongoing in relation to identifying potential Day 1 service implications in relation to Brexit. Members will be aware that there is ongoing uncertainty around the outcome and timings around the EU exit, therefore Officers are currently preparing for a 'no deal' scenario.

Members are advised that the following actions have being undertaken:

- i. the Council's critical services have completed Brexit Resilience Measures templates to identify the potential impact that Brexit may have on service delivery over the period after exit from the EU and the necessary resilience measures that need to be taken before the exit date; and**
- ii. responsible officers have reviewed and updated their Business Continuity Plan ensuring that it deals with service delivery post Brexit, and have communicated it to relevant staff.**

Members are also advised that a process for internal situational reporting has been developed whereby emergency planning staff will provide situational reporting and daily position statements to the Council's senior management team and Members on critical services as appropriate. Officers are also working with relevant partners in relation to external situational reporting and the need to report on a daily basis into a central command hub. If this becomes necessary it will be added into the internal reporting process. Members are advised that this process went live w/c 25th March and reporting took place for several days. However due to the change of the EU exit date from 29th March and uncertainty around the timings of the exit, it was decided by the NICS that daily reporting was not required at this point and that the frequency of reporting would be kept under review as the situation evolves. Members should note that this period of reporting was a good test of the arrangements and officers are confident that the process works and can be activated as required.

EU Settlement Scheme

Members are advised that the previous Committee agreed that an information session on the EU Settlement Scheme be held in the City Hall. Under the Government's EU Settlement Scheme, EU, EEA, Swiss citizens and their families must apply to obtain the immigration status they need in order to live and work in the UK after June 30th, 2021. It was also agreed that local organisations who successfully obtain funding from the Home Office funding scheme to allow them to support EU citizens to apply to the Scheme, be invited to provide the information at the session. Members are advised that several local organisations have been successful in receiving funding

from this scheme and that council officers will work with them to hold an information session over the coming months as previously agreed.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial implications relating to this report but members should note that there is no budget associated with this Committee.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

There are no implications relating to this report.”

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. noted the contents of the report and that it would, at its next meeting, receive a draft work plan for consideration;
- ii. agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting outlining the various European Directives and legislation governing the work of the Council currently; and
- iii. in terms of the impact of Brexit upon Workers/Human Rights and on the environment, agreed that the following be invited to attend a future meeting:
 - Representatives of Trades Unions
 - Representatives of environmental organisations;
 - Dr. Mary Dobbs – Queen’s University;
 - Professor Colin Harvey – Queen’s University; and
 - Dr. Daniel Holder – CAJ.

New Institutions – Queen’s University Research

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 11th April, it had received details of a range of new structures which would be put in place, should a Withdrawal Agreement be passed. Those would include a United Kingdom – European Union Joint Committee, to implement and apply the Agreement, a specialised Committee on Ireland/Northern Ireland, to consider proposals around the implementation and application of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland and a Joint Consultative Working Group to serve as a forum for the exchange of information and consultation.

**Brexit Committee,
Thursday, 20th June, 2019**

The Committee had agreed that a letter be forwarded on its behalf to Mr. David Sterling, Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, emphasising the importance of engagement with councils as the new institutions were developed.

The Commissioner for Resilience reported that the Department for the Economy had commissioned Queen's University to undertake research around the new institutions. The researchers would be gathering evidence to inform Northern Ireland's preparation for managing the governance opportunities and challenges arising from Brexit. The project would examine evidence from across European and non-European regions in order to identify the impact on Northern Ireland of the proposed institution arrangements contained within the Withdrawal Agreement, the role which existing governance structures could play in post-Brexit structures, how policy makers in Northern Ireland could influence the new structures and, finally, how the views non-political stakeholders could be taken into account.

She confirmed that Council officers had met with the researchers to stress the need to engage with Local Government as the new institutions were developed and on the implementation/impacts of Brexit at a local level.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and that it would receive regular updates as the research progressed.

Brexit Select Committee

The Committee noted that it would, at its next meeting, receive a report on the outcome of a mapping exercise which had, following a Freedom of Information request, been published recently by the Brexit Select Committee, highlighting areas of joint co-operation on the island of Ireland which would be impacted by Brexit.

**Update on Local Government Auditor's Report –
Preparations for Leaving the European Union**

The City Solicitor drew the Committee's attention to that part of the Local Government Auditor's Report for 2019 addressing Local Government's preparations for leaving the European Union.

The report had indicated that:

- the lack of clarity so far on the shape of an exit deal and a clear way forward, as well as the absence of additional funding, inevitably meant that councils have been limited in terms of the practical preparations which they can make;
- exiting the European Union posed a significant risk to Local Government service delivery, in particular, community planning, the economy and tourism. Preparations for European Union withdrawal across councils varied. Approaches commonly included monitoring and inclusion in risk registers, as well as briefings and reports to Councillors. Some councils also reflected the risk in corporate and financial plans.

**Brexit Committee,
Thursday, 20th June, 2019**

Several councils had established working groups or committees to focus on this issue;

- no council was fully ready, in operational terms, for a no-deal exit;
- whatever the outcome, the capacity of councils to implement any changes necessary may be constrained given the short time available;
- should there be a failure to agree arrangements for the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, there would be no transition period and councils would need to respond immediately;
- looking ahead, councils faced a wide range of challenges and opportunities; and
- delivering positive outcomes would require strong leadership, effective governance structures and continued engagement both internally and externally. This could be further enhanced through the development of effective partnership arrangements with other public bodies and local communities.

After discussion, the Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed that the Local Government Auditor be invited to attend a future meeting in order to discuss the matter further.

Issues Raised in Advance by Members

Support for the Backstop as part of any Withdrawal Agreement

Councillor de Faoite reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 9th August, 2018, it had passed the following motion on the Backstop Option, which had, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), been referred to it by the Council on 4th June:

“This Council supports paragraph 49 of the agreed Joint Report from the Negotiators of the European Union and the British Government of December 2017 which is an approach that will ensure there is no hardening of the border in Ireland.

The Council recognises that the ‘backstop’ option is the minimum position, agrees to lobby for retaining this and, furthermore, any position which the Brexit Committee adopts going forward. In addition, the Council demands that the full EU rights of citizens are protected, as proposed in the current draft Withdrawal Agreement.”

He highlighted the importance of ensuring that the ‘backstop’ remained at the forefront of all discussions around Brexit and, accordingly, he suggested that a letter be forwarded to the incoming Prime Minister restating the Council's position, as set out in the aforementioned motion.

**Brexit Committee,
Thursday, 20th June, 2019**

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Long,
Seconded by Councillor Flynn,

That the Committee agrees that a letter be forwarded to the incoming Prime Minister and to the Taoiseach reiterating the Council's overall position in relation to Brexit, namely, that:

- i. the majority of people in Belfast and in Northern Ireland voted to remain in the European Union;
- ii. Northern Ireland should be afforded special designated status;
- iii. Northern Ireland cannot withstand exclusion from the Single Market or Customs Union;
- iv. the Good Friday Agreement must be protected in all its parts;
- v. there must be no diminution of Human Rights and equality provisions which must be protected;
- vi. the 'backstop' agreed by the Government and the EU27 is the bottom line in order to safeguard political and economic stability now and for the future; and
- vii. the Council supports 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.

The Committee agrees further that the letter to the incoming Prime Minister and to the Taoiseach should stress the Council's opposition to a No-Deal Brexit.

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

Chairperson

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