

Council

ANNUAL MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the Council Chamber, City Hall and remotely, via Microsoft Teams, on Wednesday, 1st June, 2022 at 6.00 p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor; (Councillor Long) (Chairperson)
The Deputy Lord Mayor, (Alderman Haire)
The High Sheriff, (Councillor Hussey);
Aldermen Copeland, Dorrian, McCoubrey, Rodgers and Sandford; and
Councillors Beattie, Black, Bradley, Bower, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, de Faoite, Donnelly, Duffy, Flynn, Garrett, Gormley, Groogan, Hanvey, Heading, Howard, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, Kyle, Lyons, Magee, Maghie, Maskey, McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McCullough, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Murphy, Murray, Newton, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Smyth, Spratt, Verner, Walsh and Whyte.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors Cobain, Ferguson and T. Kelly.

Declarations of Interest

Alderman Copeland declared an interest in respect of an item contained within the minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, under the heading "Summer Community Diversionary Festivals Programme", in that her daughter was a Director of an organisation that had received funding from the programme;

Councillor Beattie declared an interest in relation to an item contained within the minutes of the People and Communities Committee, under the heading "DfC Community Support Programme Letter of Offer 2022-2024", in that he was employed by Blackie River Community Group;

Councillor Black declared an interest in relation to an item contained within the minutes of the People and Communities Committee, under the heading "DfC Community Support Programme Letter of Offer 2022-2024", in that she had been engaged with the Grosvenor Community Centre;

Councillor Bunting declared an interest in relation to items contained within the minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, under the headings "Summer

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Community Diversionary Festivals Programme” and “Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – Funding Programme” in that, she was a member of a Community Group which had received funding from both programmes;

Councillor Corr declared an interest in relation to an item contained within the minutes of the People and Communities Committee, under the heading “DfC Community Support Programme Letter of Offer 2022-2024”, in that he worked for an organisation that had received funding from the programme;

Councillor McCullough declared an interest in respect of an item contained within the minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, under the heading “Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – Funding Programme”, in that he associated with an organisation which had applied for funding.

Councillor Verner declared an interest in respect of an item contained within the minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, under the heading “Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – Funding Programme”, in that she associated with an organisation which had applied for funding; and

Councillors Beattie, Lyons, O’Hara and McDonough-Brown declared an interest in respect of an item contained within the minutes of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, under the heading “Freeport/Innovation Zones”, in that, they were on the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners, and left the meeting whilst the matter was under consideration.

Minutes of the Council

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Councillor Long),
Seconded by Councillor Magee and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 9th May be taken as read and signed as correct.

Disclosure of Family Relationship

The Chief Executive informed the Council that, in accordance with Section 30 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972, he had been advised by Councillor McCabe that, her husband, Mr. Jim Girvan, had been offered an appointment as a Lead Officer within the Council.

Official Announcements

Welcome

The Lord Mayor (Councillor Long) welcomed Councillors Bower, Duffy, Maghie, Murray and Nelson to their first meeting of Council and wished them well in their tenure.

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Congratulations

The Lord Mayor (Councillor Long) offered congratulations to former Councillor Nicholl and her family, on the recent birth of her daughter, Étaín Evelyn.

Councillor Bunting offered congratulations to the Queen, on her Platinum Jubilee, the Lord Mayor concurred, and extended his congratulations to the Queen on the momentous occasion.

Condolences

The Lord Mayor (Councillor Long), on behalf of the Council, offered condolences to the Chief Executive on the recent death of his Father-in-law.

Alderman Sandford extended his condolences to the family of 10-year-old Poppy Ogle, who had passed away following a year-long battle with cancer. He commended the people of the Cregagh estate for their support to Poppy's family and he thanked Lord Mayor for wearing a yellow ribbon, representing Poppy's favourite colour, in her memory.

Councillor Howard requested that, the Council pass its condolences to the Hastings family, on death of Lady Joy Hastings. The Lord Mayor agreed to write to the family on behalf of the Council.

Thanks

Councillor Duffy thanked former Councillor Baker for his work in office and stated that he would continue that work with the same determination and vigour.

Positions of Responsibility 2022/23 (Year 4)

The Chief Executive reminded the Council that, at the Annual Council meeting on 21st May, 2019, the Council decided on the political parties that would be entitled to hold the Positions of Responsibility for each year of the 4-year Term and that Year 4 of the Council Term was to commence forthwith.

He recommended that the Council appoint the nominated Members, as identified by the Nominating Officers of the political parties concerned, to the Positions of Responsibility for Year 4 of the Council Term as outlined below:

Civic Dignitaries

Lord Mayor	Councillor Black
Deputy Lord Mayor	Councillor M. Kelly

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Chairperson	Councillor McDonough-Brown
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Heading

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Chairperson	Councillor Murphy
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Spratt

People and Communities Committee

Chairperson	Councillor McMullan
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Bunting

Licensing Committee

Chairperson	Councillor Matt Collins
Deputy Chairperson	Alderman McCullough

Planning Committee

Chairperson	Councillor Whyte
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Maskey

Climate and City Resilience Committee

Chairperson	Councillor Walsh
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor McKeown

Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd Shareholders' Committee

Chairperson	Councillor Maghie
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Newton

Standards and Business Committee

Chairperson	Councillor Harvey
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor de Faoite

The Council agreed to appoint the Positions of Responsibility for Year 4 of the Council term, as set out above.

Request to Film Proceedings

The Chief Executive reported that requests to film or photograph the installation of the Lord Mayor and the Deputy Lord Mayor had been received from a number of media outlets.

The Council agreed to accede to those requests.

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Installation of the Lord Mayor

The Chief Executive reminded the Council that it had, earlier in the meeting, approved the Positions of Responsibility for 2022/2023 and that Councillor Black had been nominated to serve as Lord Mayor.

Accordingly, Councillor Black was installed in Office for the period to end on the date of the annual meeting of the Council in 2023 and she subscribed to the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor Black thanked her Political Party for nominating her to serve as Lord Mayor, she outlined her 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 Black, in the Chair.)

Installation of the Deputy Lord Mayor

The Council was again reminded that, earlier in the meeting, Councillor M. Kelly had, under the Positions of Responsibility for 2022/2023, been nominated to serve as Deputy Lord Mayor.

Accordingly, Councillor M. Kelly was installed in Office for the period to end on the date of the annual meeting of the Council in 2023 and she subscribed to the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

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

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

Committee Membership 2022/23 - Selection of Remaining Places

The Chief Executive reminded the Council that, at its meeting on 29th April, 2019, the Council agreed the Governance arrangements for the current Council term 2019 - 2023, which had included an annual review of Committee membership, with Members to be appointed for one-year terms and reappointed at each Annual Meeting.

He advised the Council that the membership of all Standing Committees would cease on the date of the Annual meeting and that Year 4 of the Term would commence on the same date.

He reported that, a meeting of the party Nominating Officers had been held on 26th May at which the remaining Committee places were to be selected, however, as not all Parties had been represented, the process was unable to proceed and that, before

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nominated Members could be appointed to the Standing Committees for 2022/23, Nominating Officers would need to select the remaining Committee places.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Long,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

Resolved - That the Council meeting be adjourned briefly, to allow the party Nominating Officers to meet and make the selection of the remaining Committee places.

Upon resumption of the meeting, the Chief Executive informed the Council that, the remaining Committee places had been selected and Party membership was as set out below and that, the names of the Committee membership for Year 4 would be circulated to the Council in due course.

Party	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee	City Growth and Regeneration Committee	People and Communities Committee	Licensing Committee	Planning Committee	Climate and City Resilience Committee	Standards and Business Committee	Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Shareholders' Committee
SF	6	6	6	6	4	6	6	4
DUP	6	5	5	5	3	5	5	3
ALL	4	4	4	3	2	3	3	2
SDLP	2	3	2	2	1	2	2	1
GREEN	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2
PBPA	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
UUP	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
PUP	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	20	20	20	20	14	20	20	14

Change of Membership on Outside Bodies

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from the following Political Parties of a change to membership of Outside Bodies:

Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership

- Councillor Murray to replace former Councillor Mulholland - Alliance
- Councillor McKeown to replace Councillor Heading - SDLP
- Councillor Newton to replace Councillor Bunting -DUP

North Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

- Councillor Nelson to replace former Councillor McAllister - Alliance

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East Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

- Councillor Newton to replace Alderman Sandford - DUP

West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

- Councillor Murray to replace Councillor Long - Alliance

The Council approved the changes.

Minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

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

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 13th and 20th May, 2022, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Amendment

Quarterly Update on Motions

At the request of Councillor Heading, and with the agreement of the Lord Mayor, the Council agreed that, with regard to the Motion under the heading 'Closure of Ulster Bank', the Lord Mayor would convene a meeting with representatives from each of the political parties, representatives from The Financial Services Union, staff representatives and the NI Chamber of Commerce, to discuss the closure of branches, and that, the meeting would take place within the following three weeks.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendment, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 13th and 20th May, 2022, were approved and adopted.

People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor Bunting,
Seconded by Councillor de Faoite,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 10th May, be approved and adopted.

Amendment

Presentation – Organiser of Bright Lights Event

At the request of Councillor Groogan, Councillor Bunting (Deputy Chairperson of People and Communities Committee), agreed, with the consent of the Council, that,

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representatives from the local area would be invited to the next meeting of the Committee to raise their concerns with regard to the event taking place.

Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 10th May were thereupon approved and adopted.

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor Murphy,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 11th May, be approved and adopted.

Amendment

(Councillors Beattie, Lyons, McDonough-Brown and O'Hara left the meeting while the proposal was under consideration)

Freeport/Innovation Zones

Moved by Alderman Dorrian,
Seconded by Councillor Bunting,

That the decision of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 11th May, under the heading "Freeport/Innovation Zones", be rejected and, accordingly, the Council agrees that officers would continue to explore the potential for a Freeport, as part of a Northern Ireland Innovation Zone.

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

<u>For 22</u>	<u>Against 26</u>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly); The High Sheriff (Councillor Hussey); Aldermen Copeland, Dorrian, Haire, McCoubrey, Rodgers and Sandford; and Councillors Bower, Bunting, Hanvey, Howard, Kyle, Long, Maghie, McCullough, Murray, Nelson, Newton, Pankhurst, Spratt and Verner.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Black); Councillors Bradley, Canavan, Carson, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, Donnelly, Duffy, Flynn, Garrett, Gormley, Groogan, Heading, Magee, Maskey, McAteer, McCabe, McCann, McCusker, McKeown, McLaughlin, Murphy Smyth, Walsh and Whyte.

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Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 11th May were thereupon approved and adopted.

(Councillors Beattie, Lyons, McDonough-Brown and
O'Hara returned to the meeting)

Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Whyte,
Seconded by Councillor de Faoite,

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

Climate and City Resilience Committee

Moved by Councillor Walsh,
Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin,

Resolved - That the Minutes of the proceedings of the Climate and City Resilience Committee of 12th May, 2022, be approved and adopted.

Standards and Business

Moved by Councillor Harvey,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

Resolved - That the Minutes of the proceedings of the Standards and Business Committee of 24th May, 2022, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Motion to be debated by Council

**Northern Ireland Troubles
(Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill**

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

“This council, noting the UK government’s introduction of the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill, believes that the proposals within this Bill fail to honour the UK’s obligation under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) to carry out proper investigations into deaths and serious injuries that occurred during the NI conflict. This council also recognises this bill is a unilateral move by the UK

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government to abandon its commitment to the Stormont House Agreement, again demonstrating contempt for agreements made with international partners.

Furthermore, this Council echoes fears made by civil society and victims organisations that, under these proposals, the Secretary of State may in practice decide who gets immunity from prosecution.

Accordingly, this Council calls on the UK government to abandon this Bill and return to the already agreed structures as outlined in the Stormont House Agreement and to recognise to state or non-state actor should have control over how a victim seeks truth and justice.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Lyons.

The motion was put to the meeting and passed.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson