

# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Monday, 26th June, 2023

## MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND  
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Black (Chairperson);  
Alderman McCoubrey; and  
Councillors Beattie, Bunting, Cobain, de Faoite,  
M. Donnelly, R.M. Donnelly, Ferguson, Garrett, Hanvey,  
Long, Maghie, Maskey, I. McLaughlin, R. McLaughlin,  
Nelson, Nic Bhranair and Smyth.

Also attended: Councillor Murray.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, Chief Executive;  
Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and  
Civic Services;  
Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;  
Ms. C. Matthews, Director of Resources and Fleet;  
Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services;  
Ms. C. Sheridan, Director of Human Resources;  
Ms. S. Toland, Director of City Services;  
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;  
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance;  
Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control;  
Ms. L. Caldwell, Director of External Affairs, Marketing and  
Communications; and  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Whyte.

### **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 5th May, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

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**Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Nic Bhranair declared an interest in relation to agenda item 6c – Update on Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund, on the basis that her employer had submitted an application for funding.

Councillor Ian McLaughlin declared an interest in relation to agenda item 6c – Update on Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund, in that he worked for an organisation which had applied for funding.

Councillor Beattie declared an interest in relation to agenda item 2c – Hardship Grant/Cost of Living Support 2022/23, on the basis that the organisation in which he was employed operated a social supermarket and might apply for funding.

As those items did not become the subject of discussion, the Members were not required to leave the meeting.

**Restricted Items**

**The information contained in the reports associated with the following twelve 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 meeting during discussion of the following twelve 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 (Northern Ireland) 2014.

**2022-23 Year End Finance Report**

The Director of Finance submitted for the Committee's consideration a report on the year-end financial position for 2022/23, together with the Quarter 4 finance report and year-end treasury position.

He reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 24th March, it had agreed to rescind its decision of 17th February in relation to the reallocation of Departmental underspends and had agreed further to use any in-year underspend to commit to covering the shortfall of up to £279,315 to fund the Citywide Tribunal Service in 2023/24.

The Director reported that, when available funds had been offset against the Departmental overspend, an overall revenue year-end surplus of £1.6 million was available. Information was then provided on the Council's reserve position, LPS Finalisation, Covid-19 losses for 2022/23, capital projects and the establishment of a hardship fund, in response to funding which had been received from the Department for Communities, details of which would be provided later in the meeting.

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The Director went on to remind the Committee that, at its meeting on 21st April, it had agreed to defer consideration of the allocation of micro and medium grants funding to enable it to be reviewed in the context of available funding at the year end. He pointed out that the Committee might now wish to allocate funds as part of the year-end reallocation process and, to aid considerations, drew its attention to the following table which highlighted the required budget to support applications up to different scoring thresholds and the number of projects which would be supported (in brackets):

<b>Grant type</b>	<b>Applications scoring above 50</b>	<b>Applications scoring above 60</b>	<b>Applications scoring above 65</b>	<b>Applications scoring above 70</b>	<b>Applications scoring above 80</b>
Medium	£555,394 (128)	£426,824 (97)	£360,207.83 (83)	£271,252 (61)	£127,539 (28)
Micro	£83,690 (64)	£79,354 (60)	£71,101.80 (54)	£59,132 (45)	£40,058 (30)
Total	£639,084	£506,178	£431,309.63	£330,384	£167,597
Active Belfast Contribution (for medium grants only)	£79,940	£79,940	£79,940	£79,940	£79,940
BCC Contribution	£559,144	£426,623	£351,369	£250,444	£87,651

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. noted the contents of the report and approved the 2022/23 balances;
- ii. agreed that the year-end surplus, after any adjustments, be set aside in a specified reserve to deal with any potential Central Government funding reductions;
- iii. noted the year-end treasury management report for 2022/23;
- iv. approved the creation of a specified reserve for hardship funding received from the Department for Communities; and
- v. agreed to allocate £431,309.63 to micro-medium grants, on the basis of a score above 65, as set out in the table above.

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**Summer Community Festivals Programme**

(Councillor Bunting declared an interest in this matter as discussions developed, on the basis that she was a member of the Belvoir Area Residents' Group which had been included in the application for the Summer Diversionary Funding under the Greater Village Regeneration Trust and left the meeting whilst it was being discussed.)

A Member referred to a proposal which had been made at the special meeting of the Committee on 16th June to allocate the entire underspend of £47,745 from the Summer Community Festivals Programme for projects being delivered in July to the Greater Village Regeneration Trust, on the basis that it had been the only one of the five unsuccessful applicants to have passed one threshold in the assessment process.

That proposal had been lost and the Committee had agreed that the underspend be used instead to develop a capacity building programme to be delivered in the autumn to groups which might wish to deliver activities next July, with any funding remaining to be returned to Departmental budgets.

The Member highlighted a number of issues which required clarification and, accordingly, the Committee granted approval for officers to undertake a further assessment of the application which had been submitted by the Greater Village Regeneration Trust and for a special meeting to be held only if it was found that the second threshold had also been met.

**Central Government Funding**

The Director of Finance reminded the Committee that Government funding was a key source of income for the Council and represented over 17% of its budgeted income in 2023-24.

He explained that Members would, through the rate setting process, be aware of the increasing financial risks around external funding over the past number of years resulting from Brexit, the cost-of-living crisis and Central Government funding cuts. The budget for Northern Ireland, which had been set on 27th April, had been reduced from £14.269bn in 2022/23 to £14.212bn in 2023/24. All Executive Departments were facing significant financial pressures, as they were now allocating budgets at a time of increasing demands on services and running costs.

With that in mind, he drew the Committee's attention to the key risks which had been communicated from Executive Departments to Council officers and stressed that, in the absence of confirmed external funding support, the rate impact of the delivery of the various programmes would need to be considered as part of the 2024/25 rate setting process.

The Director went on to point out that the Council was, from a financial management perspective, obliged to include the risks from Government funding in its monitoring and planning processes and concluded by recommending that the Committee:

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- i. note the risk to grant funded projects for 2023/24, based on current information;
- ii. agree to receive regular updates on the impact of Executive budget cuts to Council grant funding; and
- iii. note the impact of the uncertainty of Executive support to Councils for the 2024/25 rate setting process.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Hardship Grant/Cost-of-Living Support 2022/23**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Committee that households were continuing to face pressures relating to inflation and the rising cost-of-living, which was having an adverse impact upon the most vulnerable in society, widening inequalities and increasing the prevalence of social isolation.

He reported that the Department for Communities had allocated £4m within the 2023/24 financial year to a hardship scheme to enable councils to provide support to the most vulnerable within their district. The Department had also advised that any underspends in the Covid-19 support grants which it had provided in 2020/21 and 2021/22 could also be ring-fenced for cost-of-living support. The Council would, therefore, have in total £1,018,790 to allocate.

The Director then provided details of what the Department for Communities deemed to be eligible and ineligible within the remit of the hardship scheme and pointed out that it had stated that funding could not be utilised for projects already being funded by the Department, unless being used to enhance or expand provision on food related schemes and that it was expected that no more than 10% in total of the funding be spent on administration of the scheme by a council or third parties.

He went on to remind the Committee that it had agreed previously that a Cost-of-Living Working Group, supported by Council officers, be established to review previous hardship schemes and work to co-design an effective hardship scheme and stated that there was now a need to seek nominees to it. Emerging proposals would, he pointed out, be submitted to this Committee in due course for consideration and approval.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

**Belfast Smart District Programme**

The Committee considered a report providing an update on current projects and initiatives associated with the Smart Belfast programme which were designed to support collaborative innovation in the City.

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The Committee:

- i. noted the progress on the £900,000 Augment the City challenge competition;
- ii. noted the work towards the delivery of a creative brief for the 'Belfast Immersive Experience' which would be shared with the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group for consideration;
- iii. approved the draft Memorandum of Understanding between Belfast and Sejong, South Korea, accompanying the report, which would on 7th August be signed by both cities during the visit by the Mayor of Sejong;
- iv. approved a contribution of £2,800 in 2024/25 to cover staffing costs for the six-month extension of the Hub-In programme due to Covid-19 delays;
- v. approved a contribution of up to a maximum of £30,000 towards the development of a potential £5 million Belfast Regional Wireless Innovation Hub bid; and
- vi. noted the request from Ulster University to work with the City Innovation Office on the design and delivery of its proposed Digital Healthcare Technology Accelerator, subject to Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council funding approval.

**Draft Amenity Bye Laws**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 18th February, 2022, it had granted approval for new draft bye laws for the good governance of Belfast City Centre to be submitted to the Department for Communities and other relevant agencies for initial consultation.

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services outlined the background to the formulation of the bye laws and reviewed the main elements contained therein and pointed out that the Department for Communities had, within its initial response, highlighted a number of issues for further consideration. It had observed that there may be the potential for the bye laws to interfere with rights under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the subsequent possibility for challenge and had confirmed that it would consult more fully with the Departmental Solicitors Office on these issues during the formal consultation process. The Department had also provided comments on the power to confiscate property and on an exemption for an official picket made by a Trade Union.

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She went to state that the Council had requested Counsel opinion on the aforementioned matters and pointed out that that opinion had included a recommendation that the words “and for the Prevention and Suppression of Nuisances in Belfast City Centre” be added to the title of the bye laws.

She confirmed that the draft amenity bye laws had been updated to take into account the comments from the Department for Communities and counsel’s opinion and recommended that the Committee grant approval for them to be issued for formal public consultation.

During discussion several Members welcomed the progress which had been made in addressing longstanding issues in the City Centre, following which the Committee adopted the recommendation and agreed that an update be sought from the Department of Justice in relation to the ongoing independent review of hate crime legislation in Northern Ireland.

**Proposal to Vest a Property**

(Having received advice from the Chief Executive, Councillors Ferguson, Garrett, Hanvey, Maskey and Nic Bhranair, who were members of the Planning Committee, left the meeting before the following item had been introduced, on the basis that there could potentially be planning considerations moving forward.)

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

- i. providing an update on the Council’s powers of compulsory acquisition;
- ii. providing context of the significance of the twelve-acre Tribeca Belfast (Tribeca) site in terms of the regeneration of the City centre; and
- iii. seeking approval to commence the procedure by initially approaching the owner to acquire the property by agreement in advance of making a Vesting Order via the Department of Communities for premises in the City centre on behalf of Castlebrooke Investments (Castlebrooke) in order to progress the land assembly necessary to implement consented elements of its Tribeca Belfast mixed use regeneration scheme.

During discussion, it was pointed out that the Standards and Business Committee would, at its meeting on 27th June, be recommended to refer to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee a motion inviting Castlebrooke Investments and/or any of its subsidiaries or related companies which had an interest in or was responsible for the development of the Cathedral Quarter to attend a future Committee meeting to present their plans and provide an update on their work being undertaken to date to develop the area.

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Accordingly, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the report until such time as the meeting with Castlebrooke Investments had taken place.

**Levelling Up – Feedback on 2 Royal Avenue  
Levelling Up Fund Application and Future Learning**

The Committee:

- i. noted the feedback received from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in respect of the unsuccessful application for Round 2 Levelling Up Funding for 2 Royal Avenue and that this feedback would be considered for any relevant learning points for future applications for external funding;
- ii. noted that there has been concern from a range of interested parties regarding the decision-making process and funding allocations associated with the Levelling Up Agenda, as set out in the recent Levelling Up Funding report published by the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee in Westminster;
- iii. noted the proposed next steps in the development of a corporate process which would ensure that the Committee could make decisions on applications for funding opportunities based on priorities and projects agreed by Members; and
- iv. noted that a portfolio of projects was being drawn up by Council officers in readiness for the announcement of future funding streams from whatever source.

**Refresh of Belfast Agenda (City Community Plan) 2023-2027**

The Committee:

- i. endorsed the draft refreshed Belfast Agenda strategy document and underpinning action plans, in advance of commencing a period of public consultation on 1st August, 2023;
- ii. noted that a co-design and intensive engagement process had been adopted to inform the refresh of the Belfast Agenda and that a summary report of this engagement activity would be published online in the coming weeks;
- iii. noted that the refreshed Belfast Agenda (and accompanying draft action plans) had been developed in liaison with Community Planning Partnership partners which were seeking organisational commitment alongside consideration by the Council and Committee;



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- iv. noted that a full Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Needs Assessment had been undertaken and would be consulted on from 1st August, 2023; and
- v. noted that officers were working towards a launch date of the refreshed Belfast Agenda for week commencing 6th November, 2023, with a specific date to be confirmed shortly and all Members to be informed.

**Belfast 2024**

(Ms. E. Clark, 2024 Programme Manager and Ms. L. A. O'Donnell, Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee was provided with a detailed presentation on the developments for Belfast 2024, the Council's ambitious year of creative celebration for Belfast, which included:

- an update on Belfast 2024 Creative Programme Development, including partners and details of an open call;
- updated B24 Budget allocations;
- partnership developments and partnership investment;
- an update on the streamlined Governance Model;
- engagement and citizen led development so far; and
- next steps.

The Committee was then provided with details of a number of decisions relating to Belfast 2024 which had been taken by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, at its meeting on 14th June, and its attention was drawn to an additional request for funding of £63,000 to support One Young World Delegates under the programme development strand, which would be taken from the 2024 budget under the creative engagement and programme development line.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of this item to enable Party Group briefings to be held.

**Review of Strategic Policy and Partnerships  
Unit, Portfolio Unit and Creation of a new  
Strategic Performance Unit**

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy submitted for the Committee's consideration a report seeking approval to implement within his Department a revised staffing structure for the Strategy, Policy and Partnerships Unit and Portfolio Unit, as well as a staffing structure for a new Strategic Performance Unit.

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Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee approve:

- i. the re-alignment of the existing Portfolio Unit structure and team to report to the Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty;
- ii. the creation of a new Strategic Performance Unit under the management of the Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty, including the creation of one Strategic Performance Manager post, two Strategic Performance and Policy Officers and one temporary Policy and Performance Analyst; and
- iii. the renaming of the Service to 'Strategy, Programmes and Partnerships'.

During discussion, a Member pointed out that approval to undertake this review had only been granted on 25th January, 2023 and highlighted the fact that the report which the Committee received on a quarterly basis on the progress of reviews being undertaken across the Council included a number which had been ongoing for more than four years.

On that basis, it was

Proposed by Councillor R. McLaughlin,  
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the report until such time as those reviews which had been ongoing for more than four years had been completed.

On a vote, nine Members voted for the proposal and ten against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.

**Update on the MAC (Metropolitan Arts Centre)**

The Committee was reminded that the MAC, which had opened in 2012 in the Cathedral Quarter and attracted 320,000 visitors annually, provided local and international art, theatre, dance and music, along with hospitality facilities.

The MAC currently received annual funding of £150,000 from the Council's Core Multi-Annual Grant programme, which was paid in two equal instalments of £75,000. This was the final year of a four-year funding commitment to the organisation at this level. The most significant investor in The MAC was the Arts Council for Northern Ireland, which allocated just under £1million annually.

It was reported that, due to issues surrounding the MAC's 2023/24 Annual Funding Programme application to the Arts Council for Northern Ireland and the timeframe taken

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to complete a potential funding review, The MAC had an immediate cash flow issue which needed to be addressed. Council officers were, therefore, proposing that a payment of £37,500, equivalent to three months' funding be made, which would be met from existing budgets under the Core Multi-Annual Grant programme allocation but be treated as transition funds. There was the potential for an additional ask, should the current circumstances dictate. The Board of the Arts Council for Northern Ireland had agreed to offer three months of transition funding until the end of September 2023, based at the level of last year's Annual Funding Programme grant, on the clear understanding that this was transition and not annual funding.

After discussion, during which the need to ensure that the City's cultural infrastructure was maintained and developed was highlighted, the Committee agreed to allocate the equivalent of six months' funding, that is £75,000, to The MAC. The Committee agreed also that the Chief Executive would write to its Board seeking clarification on how this funding would be utilised and suggesting that the Council be involved in discussions around funding requirements moving forward.

**Award of arc21 Interim Residual Waste Contract**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 23rd March, it had noted that arc21 had procured an interim contract for the treatment and disposal of the Council's residual waste. Following a procurement exercise, the interim contract had been signed on 12th May and the unsuccessful bidder, which would continue to provide this service under a contract directly with the Council until 30th June, had been notified on 16th May.

The Director of Resources and Fleet reported that the unsuccessful bidder had since issued two legal challenges against arc21 and confirmed that a Court ruling earlier that day in relation to the first, seeking an injunction to prevent the implementation of the contract, had not been granted by the Judge. The Council would now proceed to work, through arc21, with the successful contractor to take action to implement the new contract, which would commence on 1st July, 2023.

She went on to point out that legal proceedings were ongoing and that the legal challenge seeking a declaration of 'ineffectiveness' and/or penalties was not due to be heard until the week commencing on 23rd October, 2023. Given the situation, it was important to ensure that sufficient interim contingency measures were put in place to ensure compliance with the Council's statutory responsibilities in relation to residual waste.

Accordingly, she recommended that the Committee delegate authority to her, in consultation with the Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services and the Director of Finance to make the appropriate contingency arrangements.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

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**Matters referred back from Council/Motions**

**Motion - Wilmont House**

The Committee was informed that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 28th March, had referred the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Murray and seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown, to this Committee for consideration:

“This Council, having due regard to the value of our heritage assets across the City, agrees to commission an independent evaluation of the options to restore Wilmont House back into use. Such an evaluation should include potential business uses and associated costings for renovation and explore the viability of community or wider civic use.”

Councillor Murray provided a brief history of Wilmont House and emphasised the need to restore the building to use and protect the built heritage of the City generally.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to adopt the motion and agreed also that the process of identifying those Council heritage assets requiring action to be taken to prevent them from falling into disrepair and to address those which already had would be undertaken in the first instance through the Area Working Groups.

**Governance**

**Appointment of Members to Outside Bodies**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 To make the appointments of Members to a range of Outside Bodies for the Council Term from 2023 to 2027.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1. note that the Council has agreed that all of the appointments to Outside Bodies will be grouped into one overall pool for the purposes of allocating positions;**
- 2. agree to nominate the representatives to NILGA as a separate one-off exercise, as set out in the report;**
- 3. note that the Council has agreed to use the Sainte Lague methodology to provide an order of party political choices of these positions;**

- 4. appoint the positions on Outside Bodies as set out in the attached appendix; and**
- 5. agree that, 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 Ligue table will be asked to nominate a representative(s).**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 Key Issues**

- 3.1.1 The Committee will be aware that there are a number of Outside Bodies which request that a Member or several Members sit on the Board of their Body. As we embark on the new Council term, we need to make these appointments.**
- 3.1.2 Members should note that several appointments to Outside Bodies were determined by the former Department of the Environment to fall within the process established in the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 for Positions of Responsibility. These 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. These 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 8 Standing Committees of the Council.**
- 3.1.3 In considering the requests for appointments to Outside Bodies which are not considered to be Positions of Responsibility, the Council is free to choose any methodology it so wishes. However, in keeping with the process of proportionality, which is enshrined in the 2014 Act and which has been employed in the Council for a number of years, the Committee has approved of the use of the Sainte Ligue system.**
- 3.1.4 The process is for all of the appointments to Outside Bodies to be grouped together in one pool and the Party Leaders at a meeting on 15th June have selected the positions set out in the Appendix.**
- 3.1.5 In order for a process to be established which deals with any additional requests from Outside Bodies for Council representation during the Council Term, it is recommended that the party or parties who would have had the next available**

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choice(s) under the Sainte Ligue table will be asked to nominate a representative(s).

**3.1.6 NILGA**

NILGA's Constitution requires that the Council's 10 nominations reflect the overall balance of the political parties on the Council. This would not be able to be achieved if the 10 positions were to be included in a larger pool of positions. Therefore, for that reason, the Council has previously agreed that the 10 nominations are allocated using a separate Sainte Ligue exercise. This was agreed again at the meeting of the Party Group Leaders on 15th June.

**3.1.7** The outcome of a Sainte Ligue exercise provided for 4 Sinn Féin, 2 DUP, 2 Alliance, 1 SDLP and 1 Green nominations.

**3.2 Financial and Resource Implications**

None Associated with this report.

**3.3 Equality, Good Relations and Rural Assessment Implications**

None associated with this report."

**Appointments to Outside Bodies**

**George Best Belfast City Airport Forum**

Sinn Féin	Councillor Pádraig Donnelly
Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Davy Douglas

**Visit Belfast**

Sinn Féin	Councillor Clíodhna Nic Bhranair
Sinn Féin	Councillor Séanna Walsh
Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sammy Douglas
Alliance Party	Councillor Eric Hanvey

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**Issue Specific Bodies**

**Belfast Hills Partnership**

Sinn Féin	Councillor Micheal Donnelly
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**Board of the Ulster Orchestra Society Limited**

Social Democratic and Labour Party	Councillor Carl Whyte
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**Cathedral Quarter Trust**

Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman Dean McCullough
Independent Member	Councillor Paul McCusker

**Fairtrade Steering Group**

Sinn Féin	Councillor Nichola Bradley
Alliance Party	Councillor Ross McMullan

**Grand Opera House Trust**

Traditional Unionist Voice	Councillor Ron McDowell
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**Groundwork Northern Ireland**

Green Party	Councillor Brian Smyth
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**Lagan Navigation Trust**

Sinn Féin	Councillor John Gormley
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**Lagan Rural Partnership Local Action Group**

Alliance Party	Councillor David Bell
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**Lagan Valley Regional Park Advisory Committee**

Sinn Féin	Councillor Geraldine McAteer
Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sarah Bunting
Alliance Party	Councillor Micky Murray

**Linenhall Library Board**

Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Nicola Verner
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**Local Strategic Partnership on Travellers Issues**

Sinn Féin	Councillor Róis-Máire Donnelly
Alliance Party	Councillor Christine Bower

**Lyric Theatre Education Advisory Panel**

Social Democratic and Labour Party	Councillor Séamas de Fáoite
Green Party	Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Áine Groogan

**Northern Ireland Amenity Council**

Sinn Féin	Councillor Matt Garrett
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**Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme**

Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sarah Bunting
Alliance Party	Councillor Micky Murray

**Somme Advisory Council**

Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Tracy Kelly
Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Bradley Ferguson
Ulster Unionist Party	Alderman Sonia Copeland



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**NI Migration Partnership - Sustainable Community and Demographics Working Group**

Sinn Féin	Councillor Tina Black
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**NILGA Policy and Learning Network**

Sinn Féin	Councillor Claire Canavan
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**Sustainable NI**

Sinn Féin	Councillor Brónach Anglin
Social Democratic and Labour Party	Councillor Gary McKeown

**Members' Related Bodies**

**National Association of Councillors**

Sinn Féin	Councillor Arder Carson
Sinn Féin	Councillor JJ Magee
Sinn Féin	Councillor Tomás Ó Néill
Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman Dean McCullough
Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Ian McLaughlin
Alliance Party	Councillor Sam Nelson
Social Democratic and Labour Party	Councillor Donal Lyons
People Before Profit Alliance	Councillor Michael Collins

**Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)**

Sinn Féin	Councillor Matt Garrett
Sinn Féin	(tbc)
Sinn Féin	(tbc)

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Sinn Féin	(tbc)
Democratic Unionist Party	Councillor Sarah Bunting
Democratic Unionist Party	Alderman Dean McCullough
Alliance Party	Councillor David Bell
Alliance Party	Councillor Jenna Maghie
Green Party	(tbc)
Social Democratic and Labour Party	Councillor Carl Whyte

The Committee adopted the recommendations and noted that, as Belfast City Centre Management had changed its governance structure and was no longer in receipt of Council funding, there was no requirement to appoint Members to that organisation.

**Appointment of Members to the Policing and  
Community Safety Partnerships and District  
Policing and Community Safety Partnerships**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 To note the appointment of Members to the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSP) and District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (DPCSPs)**

**2.0 Recommendation**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to note the report and the nominations listed below.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 Key Issues**

**3.1.1 The Committee will be aware that the appointment of Members to the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSP) and District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (DPCSPs) are considered as positions of responsibility.**

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- 3.1.2 These positions had been agreed previously during selection of choices for other positions of responsibility using the d'Hondt system which was ratified at the Annual meeting of the Council.

**PCSP**

- 3.1.3 The PCSP is appointed based on proportionality to reflect the political balance of the Council following the local government election in May.

The representation on the PCSP as result of that exercise was as follows:

4 Sinn Féin 2 DUP 2 Alliance 1 SDLP

The legislation requires that, as far practicable, the position of Chair is to be held in turn by the four largest Parties represented on the Council immediately after the last local election.

- 3.1.4 At the meeting of the Party Group Leaders on 15th June the order of choices was as follows:

Year	1	2	3	4
Party	SDLP	SF	DUP	ALL

- 3.1.5 **DPCSPs**

All DPCSPs are taken together for the allocation of places and should also reflect the political balance of the Council after the election. There are six places on each giving a total of 24.

This results in the following allocation: SF 10, DUP 6, All 4, SDLP 2, Green 1 and UUP 1.

- 3.1.6 The legislation again requires the positions of Chair to be held, as far as practicable, by each of the four largest Parties on the Council. At the same meeting the following positions were selected:

**Chair**

DPCSP	North	South	East	West
Year 1	SF	DUP	ALL	SF
Year 2	SF	SF	DUP	SF
Year 3	DUP	SDLP	SF	SF
Year 4	ALL	ALL	SDLP	DUP

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**3.1.7 Following an exercise for the selection of places of the DPCSPs, the overall makeup of the DPCSPs for the 4-year term is as set out below:**

North	South	East	West
SF 2	SF 3	SF 2	SF 3
DUP 2	DUP 1	DUP 2	DUP 1
ALL 1	ALL 1	ALL 1	ALL 1
GREEN 1	SDLP 1	SDLP 1	UUP 1

**3.2 Financial and Resource Implications**

None Associated with this report.

**3.3 Equality, Good Relations and Rural Assessment Implications**

None associated with this report.”

Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership Membership	
<b>SDLP (Chairperson Year 1)</b>	Councillor Donal Lyons
<b>SF</b>	Councillor Claire Canavan (West)
<b>SF</b>	Councillor Conor Maskey (North)
<b>SF</b>	Councillor Caoimhín McCann
<b>SF</b>	Councillor JJ Magee
<b>DUP</b>	Councillor Tracy Kelly (South)
<b>DUP</b>	Councillor Ian McLaughlin
<b>ALL</b>	Councillor Fiona McAteer (East)
<b>ALL</b>	Councillor Emmet McDonough-Brown

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<b>North Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships</b>	
<b>SF (Chairperson Year 1)</b>	Councillor Conor Maskey
<b>SF</b>	Councillor JJ Magee
<b>DUP</b>	Councillor Fred Cobain
<b>DUP</b>	Alderman Dean McCullough
<b>ALL</b>	Councillor Sam Nelson
<b>GREEN</b>	Councillor Anthony Flynn

<b>South Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships</b>	
<b>DUP (Chairperson Year 1)</b>	Councillor Tracy Kelly
<b>SF</b>	Councillor John Gormley
<b>SF</b>	Councillor Pádraig Donnelly
<b>SF</b>	Councillor Geraldine McAteer
<b>SDLP</b>	Councillor Donal Lyons
<b>ALL</b>	Councillor Micky Murray

<b>East Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships</b>	
<b>ALL (Chairperson Year 1)</b>	Councillor Fiona McAteer
<b>SF</b>	Councillor Pádraig Donnelly

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<b>SF</b>	Councillor John Gormley
<b>DUP</b>	Councillor Davy Douglas
<b>DUP</b>	Councillor Andrew McCormick
<b>SDLP</b>	Councillor Séamas de Fáoite

<b>West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships</b>	
<b>SF (Chairperson Year 1)</b>	Councillor Claire Canavan
<b>SF</b>	Councillor Caoimhin McCann
<b>SF</b>	Councillor Micheal Donnelly
<b>DUP</b>	Councillor Nicola Verner
<b>ALL</b>	Councillor David Bell
<b>UUP</b>	Alderman Jim Rodgers

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Appointment of Members to Partnership Boards**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/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 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 the Party allocations for the Forward South and Eastside Partnerships as set out below; and
3. approve 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 below.

### **3.0 Main Report**

#### **Key Issues**

The Council has, since 2011, made nominations of Members to serve on the 4 Partnership Boards (Forward South, Eastside 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.

The representation on each of the Partnerships is as follows:

Forward South Partnership – 5 Members  
Eastside Partnership – 3 Members  
West Belfast Partnership – 8 Members  
Greater Shankill Partnership - 6 Members

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.

#### **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.

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

Four of the five seats are allocated automatically. The Quota Greatest Remainder system dictates that where two or more parties have the same figure the available place(s) should be allocated to the parties which attracted the most first preference votes in the most recent elections. Accordingly, the extra place is allocated to the Alliance Party.

The overall allocation is 2 Alliance, 1 DUP, 1 SF and 1 SDLP.

**Eastside Partnership Board (3 Members)**

In previous years, there were 8 Elected Members on the Eastside Partnership Board.

However, in March 2023, correspondence was received from the Chief Executive Officer stating that, following a governance review of the Board, there will only be 3 spaces for Belfast City Council Elected Members and preference is that there would be one Councillor from each of the DEAs - Lisnasharragh, Ormiston and Titanic.

The representation is based on the use of the Quota Greatest Remainder would be as follows:

**Lisnasharragh**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Number of Members</b>	<b>Representation</b>
ALL	2	(0.33) 1 *
DUP	2	(0.33) 0
Green	1	(0.16) 0
SDLP	1	(0.16) 0
	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>

\*Greater number of 1st Preference votes



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**Ormiston**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Number of Members</b>	<b>Representation</b>
ALL	3	(0.5) 1
DUP	2	(0.33) 0
Green	1	(0.17) 0
UUP	1	(0.17) 0
	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>

**Titanic**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Number of Members</b>	<b>Representation</b>
DUP	2	(0.33) 1 *
ALL	2	(0.33) 0
SF	1	(0.17) 0
UUP	1	(0.17) 0
	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>

**The seats are allocated as follows: 2 Alliance and 1 DUP**

**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 and 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:

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<b>Party</b>	<b>Number of Members</b>	<b>Representation</b>
SF	17	(9.5) 9
DUP	4	(2.24) 2
PBPA	1	(0.56)) 1
SDLP	1	(0,56) 1
IND	1	(0.56) 1
TUV	1	(0.56) 0
	<b>25</b>	<b>14</b>

Eleven of the fourteen seats are allocated automatically. The PBPA, SDLP, Independent and TUV all have an equal greatest remainder figure of .56.

The Quota Greatest Remainder system dictates that where two or more parties have the same figure the available place(s) should be allocated to the parties which attracted the most first preference votes in the most recent elections. In this instance (taking into account the first preference votes across the four DEAs) the remaining seats are allocated to PBPA, SDLP and the Independent.

Accordingly, the overall allocation across the two Boards is: 9 SF, 2 DUP, 1 PBPA, 1 SDLP and 1 Independent.

As in previous years, it is recommended that the Party Leaders concerned meet to reach a compromise position for the allocation of seats on both Partnerships.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

None associated with this report.

**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 following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/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; and**
- 2. agree to the allocation of the seats on the five Forums as follows:**
  - Lower Oldpark and Hillview – 2 SF**
  - Tiger's Bay and Mountcollyer – 1 DUP and 1 SF**
  - Lenadoon and Glencolin – 2 SF**
  - Lower Shankill and Brown Square and Falls – 2 DUP, 1 SF and 1 TUV**

## **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 and 2019, 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**

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undertaken. It is recommended that the same approach is taken for the nomination of Members in 2023.

**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

**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 and 2019.**

**3.1.7 The outcome of the Quota Greatest Remainder exercise for each of the Forums is set out below:**

**3.1.8 Lower Oldpark and Hillview – Oldpark DEA**

Party	Number of Members	Representation
SF	4	(1.33) 2
DUP	1	(0.33) 0
IND	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, DUP and SDLP each have a remainder figure of 0.33. Therefore, the second seat is allocated to SF.

The two seats are allocated to SF.

**3.1.9 Tiger's Bay and Mountcollyer – Castle DEA**

Party	Number of Members	Representation
DUP	2	(0.66) 1
SF	2	(0.66) 1
ALL	1	(0.33) 0
SDLP	1	(0.33) 0
	6	2

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

**3.1.10 Lenadoon and Glencolin – Collin and Black Mountain DEAs**

Party	Number of Members	Representation
SF	11	(1.69) 2
PBPA	1	(0.15) 0
SDLP	1	(0.15) 0
	13	2

The two available seats are therefore allocated to SF.

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

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

The four available seats across the two Forum areas are allocated to DUP (2), SF (1) and TUV (1). As in previous years, 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 and 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 2023**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1** To provide the Committee with an update on the roles and remits of the various Working Groups and consider which Groups it wishes to reconstitute.

**2.0     Recommendations**

**2.1     The Committee is asked to:**

- note the Terms of Reference of the Working Groups;  
    and
- agree which Groups it wishes to reconstitute.

**3.0     Main Report**

**Key Issues**

**Committee Structure**

- 3.1     The Committee is reminded that, at its meeting on 21st April, it had considered a report on the new Council term commencing in May, 2023 and agreed to continue with the existing governance arrangements, that is, a traditional committee system, with 8 standing Committees.**

**Working Groups**

- 3.2     Since 2007, the Council has 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:**

- 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.

- 3.3     At the meeting on 21st April, the Committee agreed to the reconstitute the following Working Groups:**

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<b>Audit and Risk Panel</b>
<b>Shared City Partnership</b>

**3.4** It agreed also that, in line with Council policy, to appoint 1 Member from each of the Parties on the Council, with a Party being defined as having 2 or more Members.

**3.5** The Committee now needs to consider which of the following Working Groups it wishes to reconstitute:

<b>All-Party Working Group on the City Centre</b>
<b>Castle, Cavehill, Zoo and North Foreshore Steering Group</b>
<b>Community Planning Working Group</b>
<b>Disability Working Group</b>
<b>Installations – City Hall/City Hall Grounds Working Group</b>
<b>Language Strategy Working Group</b>
<b>Social Policy Working Group</b>
<b>Reference Group on Older People</b>
<b>Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Development Working Group</b>
<b>East Area Working Group</b>
<b>North Area Working Group</b>
<b>South Area Working Group</b>
<b>West Area Working Group</b>

**3.6** **Financial and Resource Implications**

**None.**

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

**None.”**

The Committee agreed to reconstitute all of the Working Groups listed in paragraph 3.5 of the report and noted that it would in due course receive a report on the outcome of a review of governance arrangements, including the role, remit and number of Working Groups.

**Revision to the Scheme of Allowances**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

- 1.1 To consider amendments to the Council’s Scheme of Allowances, adjusting the rates of Special Responsibility Allowances to reflect the increase in membership of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders’ Committee and the change in Party strengths at the recent Local Government Elections.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1. approve the increase in the allowance of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders’ Committee to the same as the Council’s seven other Standing Committees;**
- 2. approve the adjustments to the allowances of the Council’s seven other Standing Committees; and**
- 3. approve the adjustments to the allowances for the Party Group Leaders, Deputy Party Group Leaders and the Party Group Secretaries.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 Key Issues**

**The Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019, Part 2, par 3 states that the Council must agree a new Scheme of Allowances for each year in which allowances are paid.**



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- 3.1.1** Paragraphs 4(2) and 5(2) further state that the amount of basic allowance and special responsibility allowances shall be determined by the Council.
- 3.1.2** The Department for Communities issued a circular, LG 10/2022, dated 28th March, 2022, which set out revised maximum limits for basic and special responsibility allowances with effect from 1st April, 2021.
- 3.1.3** The Department for Communities issued a further circular, LG 03/2023 dated 25th January, 2023, which set out revised maximum limits for basic and special responsibility allowances with effect from 1st April, 2022 which the Council chose not to apply.
- 3.1.4** The allowance paid to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee was previously set at half that paid to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the other Standing Committees as it had a membership of 14 Councillors compared to the 20 Councillor membership of most of the other committees.
- 3.1.5** The membership of this committee, along with the Planning Committee, was increased this Council term to 20 members to bring them in line with all of the Council's other Standing Committees.
- 3.1.6** For a number of years, the Council has agreed a split in the special responsibility allowance budget so as to pay a Special Responsibility Allowance to the Chairpersons and the Deputy Chairpersons of the Standing Committees and to the Party Officers (Party Leaders of parties of 12 or more members, Deputy Party Leader of parties of five or more members, and Party Secretary of parties of 12 or more members).
- 3.1.7** **Special Responsibility Allowance**

The Committee is requested to consider whether it wishes to apply the increases to the allowances paid to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of each of the Council's Standing Committees as detailed in the table below.

The Committee is further requested to consider if it wishes to apply the suggested increase to the allowances for Party Officers following the changes to party strengths at the recent Local Government Election.

**3.1.8** **Financial and Resource Implications**

There is no increase to the overall Special Responsibility budget as any increases are the result of adjustments made

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according to different party strengths following the recent Local Government Election.

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

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

**Division of Special Responsibility Allowances**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Chairperson	Strategic Policy and Resources	£5,460.00	£5,500.00
Chairperson	City Growth and Regeneration	£5,460.00	£5,500.00
Chairperson	People and Communities	£5,460.00	£5,500.00
Chairperson	Licensing	£5,460.00	£5,500.00
Chairperson	Planning	£5,460.00	£5,500.00
Chairperson	Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall	£2,730.00	£5,500.00
Chairperson	Climate and City Resilience	£5,460.00	£5,500.00
Chairperson	Standards	£5,460.00	£5,500.00
Deputy Chairperson	Strategic Policy and Resources	£2,730.00	£2,750.00
Deputy Chairperson	City Growth and Regeneration	£2,730.00	£2,750.00
Deputy Chairperson	People and Communities	£2,730.00	£2,750.00
Deputy Chairperson	Licensing	£2,730.00	£2,750.00
Deputy Chairperson	Planning	£2,730.00	£2,750.00
Deputy Chairperson	Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall	£1,365.00	£2,750.00
Deputy Chairperson	Climate and City Resilience	£2,730.00	£2,750.00
Deputy Chairperson	Standards	£2,730.00	£2,750.00
subtotal		<b>£61,425</b>	<b>£66,000</b>

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<b>Party Officer</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Party Group Leader	Sinn Fein (22 Members)	£6,383.70	£7,687.08
Party Group Leader	DUP (14 Members)	£5,897.25	£6,209.96
Party Group Leader	Alliance (11 Members)	£5,086.50	£5,656.04
Party Group Leader	SDLP (5 Members)	£4,437.90	£4,548.20
Party Group Leader	GREEN (3 Members)	£4,113.60	£4,178.92
Party Group Leader	UUP (2 Members)	£3,789.30	£3,994.28
Party Group Leader	PBPA (4 Members)	£3,951.45	-
Party Group Leader	PUP (2 Members)	£3,789.30	-
Dep Party Group Leader	Sinn Fein	£3,150	£3,250
Dep Party Group Leader	DUP	£3,150	£3,250
Dep Party Group Leader	Alliance	£3,150	£3,250
Dep Party Group Leader	SDLP	£3,150	£3,250
Party Group Secretary	Sinn Fein	£3,150	£3,250
Party Group Secretary	DUP	£3,150	£3,250
subtotal		<b>£56,349.00</b>	<b>£51,774.48</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>£117,774</b>	<b>£117,774</b>

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Nelson,  
Seconded by Councillor Harvey,

That the Committee agrees that no allowance be paid to Party Group Secretaries.

On a vote, four Members voted for the proposal and thirteen against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.

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**Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues**

**Recruitment of Chief Officers**

Having been informed that the current Director of External Affairs, Marketing and Communication would be leaving the Council in August, 2023, the Committee:

- i. adopted the recommendation to recruit the post on a replacement basis and to change the title to Director of Communications, Marketing and External Affairs;
- ii. noted that, due to timing issues, the Chief Executive had, following consultation with the Party Group Leaders, taken the decision under delegated authority to proceed to advertise the post on 29th and 30th June; and
- iii. agreed that the selection panel comprise the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Smyth, the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services (or her nominee) and a Council Director;

In addition, the Committee:

- i. approved the proposed timeline for the recruitment of the posts of Strategic Director of City Operations, Strategic Director of Place and Economy and City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services; and
- ii. adopted the recommendation to change the title of Director of Physical Programmes/Physical Programmes Department to Director of Property and Projects/Department of Property and Projects.

**Department for Communities' Equality Impact  
Assessment Consultation on its 2023-24 Budget**

The Committee approved the Council's response to the Department for Communities' consultation, which can be accessed [here](#).

**Update on Belfast Region City Deal**

The Committee considered the following report:

**"1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**This report provides the Committee with an update on the progress of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) and seeks approval of the first Annual Report.**

**2.0     Recommendations**

**2.1     The Committee is asked to:**

- i.    approve the BRCD Annual Report for 2022/23;**
- ii.   note the update on project development and delivery across the pillars of investment;**
- iii.   note the update in relation the Implementation and Financial Plan;**
- iv.   note the updates on key pieces of work in relation to Net Zero and Green Growth; and**
- v.    note the update in respect of programme communication and the BRCD Council Panel.**

**3.0     Main Report**

**Annual Report 2022/23**

**3.1     As previously reported to the Committee, the agreed reporting arrangements for all City and Growth Deals requires the production of an Annual Report and the requirement to meet with the Northern Ireland Delivery Board in order to discuss deal progress as part of an ‘Annual Conversation’.**

**3.2     This is the first annual report produced for BRCD and outlines the significant progress made moving the deal from development to delivery stage in a period during which the partners have faced the considerable challenges of inflation, economic and political uncertainty and constraints on the public finances, alongside the complexities of City Deal financing and governance. The report provides an update on the progress of all the BRCD projects across its pillars of investment and key highlights include:**

- A total of 11 Outline Business Cases (OBC) have now been approved, with 3 more at advanced stages of the approval process**
- The first contract was signed by Ulster University for the Studio Ulster project in July 2022 and has been followed in recent months with contracts signed with Council partners for Carrickfergus Regeneration, Bangor Waterfront Regeneration and Newry City Centre Regeneration. In the latter part of 2022/23 contracts were signed with Queen’s University for the Advanced**

**Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC) (also supported by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council and Ulster University), The Global Innovation Institute (GII) and Institute of Research Excellence for Advanced Clinical Healthcare (iREACH) projects**

- **The seven contracts for funding that have been signed will enable the delivery of projects with an approximate value of £430m.**
- **The Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge and Newry Southern Relief Road - which will be financed directly through BRCD funds available to the Department of Infrastructure - also have the approvals necessary to move into the delivery phase.**
- **The first funding drawdown requests for the BRCD have now been submitted to the Department for Economy (DfE) and Department for Communities (DfC) and the first claim to a BRCD partner has been completed, marking significant milestones for deal delivery.**
- **Another key milestone for deal partners was commencement of construction on the first project, the 57,000ft<sup>2</sup> Studio Ulster site at Giant's Park in October 2022.**
- **2022/23 also saw work commence on the skills assessment process to understand and respond to the labour and skills implications and opportunities of the city deal investment projects. The first assessment, focusing on the construction opportunities arising through the investment, has already informed a series of recommendations both for BRCD partners, and other stakeholders.**
- **A Task and Finish Group looking across Northern Ireland at skills for advanced manufacturing has completed its work, with a draft report due in the summer of 2023.**
- **In January 2023 the BRCD partners launched the new BRCD website to assist in increasing awareness and understanding of the deal, its ambitions and the benefits it will deliver.**

**3.3 The Annual Report, which was approved by the BRCD Executive Board on 14th June 2023 has been circulated for Members' consideration. The individual BRCD partners will**

also be seeking approval for the Annual Report through their own governance structures. The report will only be published after all approvals have been obtained.

- 3.4 The report will be shared with the Department of Finance (DoF) in advance of the Annual Conversation which is scheduled to take place in early July.

3.5 **Implementation Plan and Financial Plan**

The overarching deal document is supported by both an Implementation Plan and Financial Plan which were agreed with the UK and NI Government departments. The Implementation Plan provides detailed information on the projects including key milestones, financial information and funding flows, risks and outcomes. It also forms the basis of the monitoring and reporting information required for each project. The Financial Plan sets out the overall financial framework including stewardship, protocols and controls and the role of the accountable body. The plan also details the financial forecasts and predicted funding flows and timelines and forms the basis of the financial reporting and profiling arrangements.

- 3.6 The Programme Management Office has been engaging closely with partners to produce an annual review of both plans alongside the production of the Annual Report. Both plans have been considered by the Finance Directors Group and following consideration by the Executive Board, will be submitted to DOF by the end of June, as required by the Contract for Funding. Also, in line with Contract for Funding Requirements Quarterly Performance Reports and Quarterly Financial Reports will continue to be submitted to the respective Accountable Departments for projects which have signed Contracts for Funding.

**Progress across BRCD Pillars since Previous Report**

**Innovation**

- 3.7 **AMIC** has received planning approval for the Factory of the Future site at Global Point in Newtownabbey and has now concluded its procurement and awarded a contract for the Pre-Construction period under the Early Contractor involvement approach. Work has commenced in relation to its Full Business Case.
- 3.8 As previously reported to the Committee, construction work on Studio Ulster commenced on site in October 2022. Following

the conclusion of the Pre-Qualification phase and publication of the Invitation to Participate in Dialogue, competitive dialogue is now well underway with the intention to appoint an operator for Studio Ulster in summer 2023 and the conclusion of the Full Business Case.

**Digital**

- 3.9 Since the last update to the Committee, the i4c Cleantech Centre, led by Mid and East Antrim has received positive news with the re-endorsement of its updated OBC by the DfE Casework Committee. The project will now proceed to consideration by DoF Supply.
- 3.10 There has also been positive progress on the Augment the City project, led by the Council's City Innovation team, which has now received approval from the Department for the Economy. Work will now commence in relation to a funding agreement and transition will move towards implementation of the project.

**Tourism and Regeneration**

- 3.11 Following a number of delays, there has been positive progress in relation to approval of OBCs with Destination Royal Hillsborough receiving DoF approval and following completion of a Financial Review the Gobbins Phase 2 was re-endorsed by the Economy Casework Committee and awaits DoF Supply approval.
- 3.12 The Contracts for Funding for Mourne Mountain Gateway, Destination Royal Hillsborough and Gobbins Phase 2 have been drafted and engagement with Government Departments is ongoing to finalise.
- 3.13 Work is also being undertaken in parallel with the drafting of the Contracts for Funding for the Tourism Projects to complete subsidy control assessments arising from the requirements of Subsidy Control Act 2022
- 3.14 Progress in relation to procurement continues with the development of procurement documentation for Integrated Consultancy Teams (ICTs) and Integrated Supply Teams (ISTs) and a number of key project procurements are now live.
- 3.15 **Belfast Stories**, the Council's flagship project continues to progress against the agreed programme. The procurement of professional services continues with the pre-qualification stage completed and Invitation to Tender documents published. Members should also note that a detailed update



was considered by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee at its June meeting.

**Infrastructure**

- 3.16 As previously reported, feasibility studies are being completed and the OBC is being updated by Department for Infrastructure for Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2. The procurement of the design and build contract for Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge will commence in the summer with appointment expected early in 2024.

**Employability and Skills (E&S)**

3.17 **Skills Assessments**

Our skills assessment process - developed through the BRCD E&S pillar to understand the labour and skills implications of the city deal investment projects – is continuing to progress. As reported in March the first ‘skills assessment’ looked at the construction opportunities arising through the city deal investment. The outworkings of this work then informed a series of recommendations for BRCD partners and other stakeholders. This approach worked well and the intention had been to extend it to other sectoral areas relevant to the BRCD

- 3.18 However, following engagement with our partners in Government – and our colleagues in other deal areas - we have since adopted a cross-deal approach to skills assessment to ensure a streamlined approach that reflects the full programme of activity planned through all 4 city and growth deals. As a result a new Cross Deal Skills Group held a meeting in May to consider the projects emerging across all 4 Deals to inform a full schedule of sectoral based skills assessments.

- 3.19 Two further skills assessments, aligned to Advanced Manufacturing and Creative Industries sectors, are already now well developed utilising this approach. An Advanced Manufacturing Assessment – completed with AMIC - will be shared with partners over the coming weeks with a view to approval in the Autumn. The Creative Industries (Virtual Production) assessment will begin to refine its emerging recommendations this month, with the intention of a final report to the Task and Finish Group in August.

- 3.20 We are currently planning recruitment of a new E&S programme manager to replace the previous post holder. This will allow us to continue to progress our ongoing

programme of skills assessments to include Digital Skills, Life and Health Sciences and Tourism.

- 3.21 To ensure that local businesses understood the opportunities arising from the construction pipeline of the BRCD investment programme – particularly over the next year – we held two events in March at which we also communicated both the inclusive growth and social value ambitions of the Deal, and the employability and skills support available through our council, college, and university partners to help the sector respond to labour and skills challenges. The events were both well attended and very well received.

**Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF)**

- 3.22 In May 2020 a collaborative cross city and growth deal bid was made to the City and Growth Deal Complementary Fund for the creation of a Digital Transformation Fund. The aim was to address the financial barriers micro businesses and SMEs face when looking to benefit from the economic opportunities of digital transformation, by establishing a capital grant fund to support investment in capital equipment (hardware and software) critical to business strategic digital transformation plans.
- 3.23 The OBC for the £7.5m DTFF project (with £6m from the Complementary Fund, £1.1m from DAERA and £451K from Derry and Strabane City Deal) involving all 11 Councils, led by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, was approved through Invest NI Casework on 10th May 23 and just last week was considered by the DfE Casework Committee, with positive feedback received and the expectation that it will move forward to Dof Approval.
- 3.24 Derry City and Strabane District Council (DCSDC) does not have access to the City and Growth Deal funding until its Deal is signed. However, government partners are content for businesses in DCSDC to be access DTFF funding from the Complementary fund/DAERA funding initially whilst the Derry and Strabane City Deal is progressing towards approval. On deal signing, £451k from the Derry and Strabane City Deal will then be allocated from the digital pillar of the deal to the DTFF.
- 3.25 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, on behalf of the partners has been making preparations for the launch of the fund whilst the business case has been going through the approvals process and so, subject to final approval, the first call is expected to be launched in Sept 23.

**Net-Zero and Green Growth**

- 3.26 Work has been undertaken with partners and with government departments in order to understand how the BRCD can respond to the challenge of net-zero.
- 3.27 A Green Growth Workshop was hosted in March 2023 by the Department of Finance and the Department for the Economy involving a representative from each of the City and Growth Deals. This was an initial workshop to seek to support deals in considering how to respond to the net-zero challenge and as well as hearing about plans for the first NI Climate Plan from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and each of the deals about how they are seeking to respond to net-zero challenges. Colleagues from North Wales Deal gave a presentation on their work to guide Growth Deal projects in North Wales to improve biodiversity and reduce operational and embodied carbon impacts from the outset of a project. A cross-deal working group will now be established to take forward this workstream, The BRCD Programme Director and Climate Commissioner have been invited to the initial meeting of the working group and an update on terms of reference, membership and workplan will be provided following this meeting.
- 3.28 Members were previously advised that partners had commissioned an assessment of the decarbonisation priorities for the Belfast region. Professor Andy Gouldson, Leeds University was appointed to develop a robust evidence base for Partners. This work titled 'An Analysis of Net Zero Options for the Belfast Region' has now been completed and the results of which were presented to the Executive Board in May and a copy shared with partners.
- 3.29 The report does not focus specifically on the BRCD programme but provides evidence on the scale of the challenge for the region and the potential options for delivery. It is intended that the analysis will:
- Assist the individual BRCD Partners in development of local net zero planning;
  - Help BRCD collectively consider future economic opportunities arising from net zero requirements and support the development of proposals for funding to allow such opportunities to be taken and integrated into the BRCD programme;
  - Support planned engagement with NI departments in relation to net zero integration across NI City and

Growth Deals, that will be led by the Working Group being established by the Department for the Economy as outlined above. This will support projects to integrate net-zero considerations into project development and delivery.

- 3.30 As outlined above given that the analysis is intended to assist BRCD partners in the development of their local net zero planning the final report will be considered by the Climate and City Resilience Committee at its meeting in August.. The Executive summary has been circulated for Members' information.

#### Programme Communication

- 3.31 The progress across the deal in recent months has been reflected in significant positive coverage in broadcast and social media. Major announcements and developments are included in the section of the BRCD website on [News & Events](#).
- 3.32 In the last week, the benefit and impact of the most advanced projects in the deal were widely reported following the announcement by AMIC of £1million of Innovate UK funding to support NI businesses and the announcement that a consortium led by Ulster University has been selected by the UK Government to host one of four new labs specialising in the future of virtual production at the BRCD funded Studio Ulster project.

#### BRCD Council Panel

- 3.33 The Council panel meeting due to be held in April and hosted by Ards and North Down Borough Council was postponed due to the Local Government Elections. Ards and North Down Borough Council will now host the September meeting due to take place on 27th September. The minutes from the panel meeting of 25th January have been circulated for Members' consideration.

#### Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.34 All costs associated with the BRCD are within existing budgets.

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

- 3.35 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.

**Consultation on The Executive Office’s Budget Allocation for 2023-2024 - Equality Impact Assessment**

The Committee approved the Council’s response to The Executive Office’s consultation, which can be accessed [here](#).

**Physical Programme and Asset Management**

**Asset Management**

**Cregagh Youth and Community Centre**

The Committee approved the grant of a licence to the Irish Rugby Football Union (Ulster Branch) for the use of the overflow parking area adjacent to Cregagh Youth and Community Centre up to twenty times per season, with the Council to receive £300 on each occasion.

**North Link Playing Fields**

The Committee approved the rectification of the Council’s boundary with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive at North Link Playing Fields, with the lands to be exchanged at nil value.

**Sally Gardens Community Centre**

The Committee approved the completion of a Deed of Dedication to Urban Villages in respect of works carried out as part of the Sally Gardens Urban Villages project.

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**Whiterock Close**

The Committee approved the grant of a licence to Glór na Móna for the erection of a Portacabin on a Council site adjoining its premises on Whiterock Close, with the Council to receive a rental income of £600 per annum.

**Gasworks Northern Fringe Masterplan - Site A**

The Committee agreed to grant a Construction Licence to Radius Housing Association/Kelly Brothers, for a period of two years, to provide access over Council owned land at Site A Gasworks Northern Fringe to facilitate the construction of social housing on Radius' adjacent site, with the fee to be assessed by the Council's Estates Management Unit.

**Gasworks Northern Fringe Masterplan - Site D**

The Committee agreed to grant a Builder's Compound Licence to Kelly Brothers, for a period of up to 2 years, to place a compound on Council owned land at Site D Gasworks Northern Fringe to facilitate the construction of social housing on Radius' adjacent site, with the fee to be assessed by the Council's Estates Management Unit.

**Update on Physical Programme**

The Committee considered the following report:

**"1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 The Council's Physical Programme currently includes over 200 capital projects with investment of £150m+ via a range of internal and external funding streams, together with projects which the Council delivers on behalf of external agencies. The Council's Capital Programme forms part of the Physical Programme and is a rolling programme of investment which either improves existing Council facilities or provides new facilities. This report includes:**

- a review of recently completed and underway physical projects,**
- requests for approvals relating to the Capital Programme,**
- a request to act as delivery agent for an Urban Villages project and;**
- approval to procure as appropriate for the Physical Programme.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- i. Physical Programme Half Year Update – to note the overall update on projects that have been completed recently and projects currently under construction as at 3.1-3.4 below and that the Physical Programmes Department is happy to arrange a site visit to any projects that have been completed or are underway;
- ii. Capital Programme movements: to agree the following movement under the Capital Programme:
  - IT Programme – SIEM QRadar Log Manager system project (move to *Stage 3 – Committed*)
  - Waterfront Hall Chiller Units, Waterfront Hall Smoke Curtains, City Hall Christmas Tree, Cremated Remains Burial Plots projects – add as *Stage 1 – Emerging* projects under the Capital Programme to allow business cases to be developed;
- iii. Role of the Council as delivery agent – to agree in principle that the Council acts as the delivery agent for a project receiving external funding from other sources (Donegall Pass Good Relations Hub under the Urban Villages Initiative on the former PSNI Station site) subject to the Council receiving a management fee for the delivery, full funding packages being in place and further discussions with Legal Services; and
- iv. Procurement – to agree that any necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate ‘framework’ arrangements) be initiated for any Physical Programmes projects including externally funded projects for 2023/24 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

#### 3.1 Physical Programme

Members will be aware that the Council runs a substantial Physical Programme. This includes the rolling Capital Programme – a multimillion regeneration programme of investment across the city which improves existing Council assets or provides new council facilities. The Council also delivers externally focused funding streams such as Belfast Investment Fund (BIF), Local Investment Fund (LIF), Social

Outcomes Fund (SOF) and Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF), as well as numerous capital programmes that we deliver for central government. Our funding partners include National Lottery Heritage Fund, SEUPB Peace IV, the Executive Office (TEO), DfC, DfI via the Blue Green Infrastructure Fund and Living with Water Programme, DAERA, Ulster Garden Villages, Levelling Up Fund (LUF) and others. Physical Programmes is happy to arrange site visits to any projects that have been completed.

### **3.2 PHYSICAL PROGRAMME HALF YEAR UPDATE**

Members are aware of the scale of the Council's Physical Programme via a range of internal and external funding streams. Below is a brief summary of projects completed over the last six months, as well as a sample of projects currently underway.

#### **Recently Completed Projects:**

- **LTP Templemore Baths** – This project comprises a £17m restoration of Templemore Baths with a focus on heritage and spa provision. Now open to the public, this is the sixth of seven new leisure facilities to be completed as part of the £105 million Leisure Transformation Programme. The facility includes an interactive visitor centre focusing on the building's heritage and many original features have been sympathetically restored. The facility includes a 25m six-lane swimming pool, a gym, spa and changing facilities, including a Changing Places facility, as well as a new café featuring the original Victorian fountain.
- **City Cemetery Visitor Centre** – part of a £2.8m scheme funded by the Council, Heritage Fund and DfC. The new centre is now open and includes an interpretive exhibition, digital touchscreens, interactive features for children, genealogy workstations and educational space. Further works and signage are ongoing.
- **Walkway Community Centre (Social Investment Fund)** - £1.8m project at Bloomfield funded by the Executive Office and DfC and delivered by Belfast City Council on behalf of Walkway Community Association. The new building includes a creche, soft play, a sports hall and meeting space. Walkway is the final SIF project to be delivered by the Council. The SIF Programme represented a total investment of £8m across 10 physical projects in Belfast: PIPs Suicide Prevention,



Joanmount Methodist Church, Glenburn Methodist Church, Mount Merrion Church, South City Resource Centre St Simon's, Greenway Women's Centre, North Belfast WISP, Mornington Community Project, St Comgall's and Walkway.

- Playground Improvement Programme - Sally Gardens and Westlands – major refurbishments of Westlands playground at Waterworks Park and Sally Gardens play park in Poleglass.
- Willowbank 3G pitch – improvements to 3G pitch and fencing alterations at Willowbank Youth Club.
- Covered cycle stands (DfI and DfC Revitalisation Fund) – stands at Belfast Zoo, Gasworks and Waterworks.
- Braniel Church (Council – Belfast Investment Fund) – extension and refurbishment to the existing church premises for community use.
- Belfast South Community Resources – Sandy Row Tourism Signage (Council - Social Outcomes Fund) – development of a tourism trail.
- Colin Valley FC (Urban Villages Initiative) – delivered by the Council on behalf of the Executive Office, this new clubhouse provides greater access to health and fitness, supporting mental health and wellbeing, supporting good community relations.

Physical Projects Underway:

3.3 Approximately 80 physical projects are currently on site or in contract including:

- Marrowbone Millennium Park – This is a £3.9m partnership project with DfC, Urban Villages, and NIHE. Contractor has been appointed and work is progressing on site, it is due for completion later this year. The park will become a vibrant, welcoming, better connected and open facility, which will be used for sport and active recreation; and social engagement.
- Ballysillan Playing Fields - This is a £7.5m partnership project with Urban Villages, DfI Living with Water and DfC. Due to go to Planning at the end of the month. It is anticipated that the contractor will be on site by next spring subject to planning approval.

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- **City Hall Statues** – Winifred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken – Sculptures for the grounds of Belfast City Hall of Mary Ann McCracken and Winifred Carney. Artist has been appointed and it is anticipated that the statues will be installed early next year.
- **Frederick Douglass Statue** – Design and install of a figurative sculpture of the abolitionist and campaigner in Rosemary Street. Due to be unveiled in Summer 2023.
- **Lagan Gateway Greenway Phase 2** – Second phase of the Lagan Gateway project focusing on new connections on the Annadale side up to Belvoir Forest.
- **Peace IV Forth Meadow Community Greenway** – new 12km urban greenway in West/North Belfast. Section 1 – Glencairn – Works complete. Section 2 – Forth River/ Springfield Road – Works due to complete within the next month. Section 3 – Falls Park/Whiterock – Works complete. Section 4 – Bog Meadows – Works complete. Section 5 – Westlink to City Centre – Works to commence in June. Signage package to be installed to include to all sections feature panels, narrative panels and beacon lights – subject to language proposals and agreement via Committee and Council. Artwork is progressing well with installation and a public unveiling planned for June 2023.
- **Peace IV - Shankill Shared Women's Centre** – On Ground and due to complete end 2023.
- **Peace IV - Black Mountain Shared Space Centre** – On Ground. Phase 1. Works progressing well. Phase 2 design team appointed. Planning application submitted. Procurement of works contractor underway.
- **Paisley Park** – On Ground. Works progressing and due to complete in autumn 2023. Project includes an upgrade to 3G pitch, new floodlights and additional changing facilities
- **Brown's Bridge** - The bridge in Lagan Meadows was closed due to structural defects and associated health and safety risks to the public. Repair works starting w/c 26th June
- **ABC Trust Health and Leisure Hub** – This £5.9m partnership project via LIF, DfC, DfI, Flax Trust and Urban Villages involves the transformation of a derelict

building formerly St Gemma's College into a modern, purpose built health and leisure community facility. Contractor appointed and work is progressing on site.

- **The Lockhouse** - This £1.5m partnership project will reimagine a historic and culturally important residential building along the Lagan towpath into a community focal point for good relations activity and cross-community partnership working including minority ethnic communities. Funded by LIF, DfC, DfI and Urban Villages. Works underway on site.
- **Corporate projects** – Range of IT projects to ensure business continuity and ongoing Fleet replacement programme
- **LIF and BIF** - A total of 6 projects on site under the BIF Programme, 12 completed to date; and a total of 7 projects are on the ground under the LIF Programme, 123 projects completed to date.

#### **CAPITAL PROGRAMME - PROPOSED MOVEMENTS**

- 3.4 The Committee agreed that all capital projects must go through a three-stage process where decisions on which capital projects progress are taken by the Committee. This provides assurance as to the level of financial control and will allow Members to properly consider the opportunity costs of approving one capital project over another capital project. The Committee is asked to note the following activity on the Capital Programme:

Project	Overview	Stage movement
IT Programme – SIEM QRadar Log Manager	Replacement of the Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) Log collector to help protect the IT infrastructure against cyber-attack.	Move to <i>Stage 3 – Committed (Tier 2 – Scheme Underway)</i>
Waterfront Hall - Chiller Units	Replacement of the chiller units at the Waterfront Hall to ensure adequate cooling for events and operational requirements.	Add as a <i>Stage 1 – Emerging project</i>

Waterfront Hall - Smoke Curtains	Redesign and replacement of the smoke curtain system at Waterfront Hall due to operational requirements	<i>Add as a Stage 1 – Emerging project</i>
City Hall Christmas Tree Provision	Consideration of options for replacement of the current Christmas Tree provision in front of the City Hall with an alternate solution	<i>Add as a Stage 1 – Emerging project</i>
Cremated Remains Burial Plots	Development of cremated remains plots at Roselawn.	<i>Add as a Stage 1 – Emerging project</i>

### 3.5 IT Programme – SIEM QRadar Log Manager System

Under the Council's IT Programme of work, this project has been identified as being business critical and required to ensure continuity of service provision. The project involves the procurement and commissioning of a Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) Log Manager System. A Log Manager system collates data logs from many different ICT infrastructure appliances and can cross reference them to provide a total Security profile for the council and will help protect the IT infrastructure against Cyber-attack.

The Committee is asked to note that a satisfactory tender return has been achieved and it is recommended that a maximum of £45,000 is now allocated to this project. The Director of Finance has confirmed that this is within the affordability limits of the Council due to the corporate criticality requirements and to ensure business continuity is maintained.

### 3.6 Waterfront Hall – Chiller Units

The existing chiller units at the Belfast Waterfront have been in place since the opening of the Waterfront and are reaching the end of their economic life. The proposal is to replace the existing chiller units with high efficiency equivalents to improve performance and resilience to ensure a more efficient cooling system. The Committee is asked to agree that 'Waterfront Hall – Chiller Units' be added to the Capital Programme as a Stage 1 – Emerging project to allow the project and costs to be fully worked up, with further detail to be brought back to Committee in due course.

**3.7 Waterfront Hall – Smoke Curtains**

Smoke curtains deploy under gravity to prevent smoke reaching other parts of a building including emergency exit routes in the case of a fire. The existing smoke curtains at the Waterfront have been in place since the opening of the Waterfront and this will examine the potential for new technological solutions which were not available at the time of the original installation. The Committee is asked to agree that 'Waterfront Hall – Smoke Curtains' be added to the Capital Programme as a Stage 1 – Emerging project to allow the project and costs to be fully worked up, with further detail to be brought back to Committee in due course.

**3.8 City Hall Christmas Tree Provision**

The City Hall Christmas tree is a major central point within the City Centre and can set the tone for the Christmas celebrations both for visitors and the local economy. Issues with tree quality and supply are expected to increase in future years and Members may wish to consider exploring a suitable alternative. Options will be explored to replace the tree with an alternative sustainable option, to gather options and costs and to look at funding streams either purchasing or leasing, and the additional costs for installation and storage moving forward. Members can note that this proposal is at an early stage of options development and does not impact on the plans recently approved by Council for Christmas 2023. The Committee is asked to agree that 'City Hall Christmas Tree Provision' be added to the Capital Programme as a Stage 1 – Emerging project to allow the project and costs to be fully worked up, with further detail to be brought back to Committee in due course.

**3.9 Cremated Remains Burial Plots**

In February 2020 Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group considered a report which initiated this proposal to develop a section for 622 cremated remains plots in Roselawn cemetery. This land is unsuitable for earth burials but is suitable for cremated remains burials subject to planning permission. The number of cremated remains burials has more than doubled since 2015. To provide for this increased demand and make efficient use of existing burial land at Roselawn it is proposed to develop a cremated remains only section. A Pre-Application Discussion took place in March and Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council who have advised that the principle would be acceptable subject to a planning application. The proposal is at an early stage of development.

The Committee is asked to agree that 'Cremated Remains Burial Plots' be added to the Capital Programme as a *Stage 1 – Emerging* project to allow the project and costs to be fully worked up, with further detail to be brought back to Committee in due course.

**3.10 REQUEST FOR COUNCIL TO ACT AS DELIVERY AGENT**

Members are asked to note that the Council has recently been requested to act as the delivery agent in principle for an additional transformational project under the Urban Villages Initiative – the Donegall Pass Good Relations Hub on the former PSNI site. Committee is asked to note that these projects are being 100% externally funded with the Executive Office as core funder. There is no Council financial commitment to the project. The Committee is asked to agree, in principle, to the Council acting as delivery agent for this project subject to the Council receiving a management fee for the delivery, full funding package being in place and further discussions with Legal Services.

**3.11 APPROVAL TO PROCURE**

The Committee is asked to agree that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate 'framework' arrangements) be initiated for any Physical Programme projects including externally funded projects for 2023/24 as required, with contracts to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver.

**Financial and Resources Implications**

- 3.12 Finance** – Capital Programme projects are equality screened.  
**Resources** – Officer time to deliver as required.

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

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations and granted approval to proceed with the erection of dual-language signage in the Marrowbone Millennium Park, subject to an equality screening.

### **Update on Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund**

The Committee considered the following report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

- 1.1 This report provides the Committee with an update on the next steps in respect of the £10m Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund.

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked:

- Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund - to note the background to this £10m fund and the update provided including the updated programme timeline for delivery.

#### **3.0 Main Report**

##### **NEIGHBOURHOOD REGENERATION FUND**

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF) is a £10m capital fund to help groups deliver capital projects that will make a real, long-term difference in their communities. Members will recall that the fund was originally £8m and has been bolstered by an additional £2m via the reallocation of year end surpluses. The fund attracted significant interest and a high volume of applications was received. The NRF Programme is currently at *Stage 2 – Development* Stage. The proposals presented in the applications showcase a wide variety of exciting new ideas for the city as well as enhancements to existing facilities. The NRF is an outcomes focused programme aligned to three key themes emerging from the City Recovery Framework: social economy, environmental sustainability and neighbourhood tourism. The fund is adopting an Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) approach derived directly from these three themes and all proposals are being specifically developed in terms of their alignment to these outcomes.

#### **3.2 Allocation Model**

Members will recall that the £10m fund allocation model per area is based on 50% proportion of population per quadrant of the city and 50% proportion of the population that is in top 20% area of multiple deprivation giving the final amounts available per area as outlined below -

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	Allocation
North	£2,434,979
South	£1,924,744
East	£2,287,501
West	£3,352,776

\* Proportional allocation to Shankill from overall West (Shankill - £705,759)

3.3 Members agreed a 3 Stage process for the NRF projects in November 2021 as outlined below

- **Stage 1-Application Stage (Emerging project)** - an open call application process via the completion of an application form. Once received it was agreed that officers from across the Council would then carry out an assessment of projects using an assessment matrix designed to test projects against 4 abilities (affordability, feasibility, deliverability and sustainability). Members agreed that projects had to score over 55 in order to be considered to proceed to the next stage (Stage 2 – Development).
- **Stage 2 – Development (Uncommitted project)** - Project development stage - at this stage a business case/economic appraisal (commensurate with the scale of the project) will be undertaken along with detailed designs and project costings. If an EA or similar has already been undertaken then the findings of this EA will be tested. Additional support (if required) will also be looked at (capacity building etc.). Due-diligence checks will be carried out in line with arrangements under LIF, BIF and SOF programmes. Proposed that this stage will be timebound to 6 months to allow decisions on projects to be taken at the same time
- **Stage 3 – Delivery (Committed project)** - Delivery stage – This is likely to be subject to a number of preconditions for particular projects including the return of a satisfactory tender. Due diligence checks will be carried out again in line with arrangements under LIF, BIF and SOF programmes. At this stage an indicative budget will be assigned to a project in line with the Council's three stage approval process. Projects will not receive a final investment decision until tenders are returned.



**3.4 Outcome of Stage 1 – Application Stage**

Members will be aware that there was substantial interest in the NRF und with requests for over 100 application packs and 61 applications received in total. In November 2022, the AWGs recommended 21 projects to the SP and R Committee to move to *Stage 2 - Development*. To inform their recommendation, the AWGs received the same information on each application which had reached the minimum threshold (above 55). In considering this Members were asked to note the delivery resource implications and also the overall budget envelope available for each area. It was also emphasised to Members that they were not making any investment decisions in a particular project at this stage. This will only be 'in principle' when projects are moved to *Stage 3 – Delivery*. It was also highlighted for Members that it was recognised that not every project which had reached threshold could be recommended to be progressed to *Stage 2 - Development*. Given this, applicants were advised of the outcome and in addition to being able to request feedback on their application, officers provided advice to applicants to help identify alternative potential sources of support. AWGs were also advised that projects which had reached threshold but that are not progressed are held at Stage 1 in case any of the projects which are moved forward do not progress beyond Stage 2. If this happens then projects will be presented again for Members' consideration.

**3.5 Stage 2 – Development Stage – Underway**

The 21 projects agreed as *Stage 2 – Development* projects have all been allocated a Client Manager who are working closely with the Groups. The exact requirements for Stage 2 are dependent on the individual status and needs of each project, for example it could be the development of a business case or economic appraisal, testing of a business case, capacity building and/or the development of detailed designs. Members agreed that the development phase will be timebound to six months with updates on all projects to be brought back to the AWGs at the same time. At the end of this stage, recommendations to Committee will include a detailed update on each project, seeking approval for funding. Projects that receive approval will be issued with a Letter of Offer in principle and will move to *Stage 3 - Delivery*. However, a final investment decision will not be taken until a tender has been returned.

**3.6 Updated Programme Delivery Timeline**

Due to the high number of projects progressing to Stage 2 and subsequent pressure on resources and the wider market, the Stage 2 timeline has extended from the original target completion date of this month. Business cases are progressing well however some are still underway so the development phase is extended to allow for all proposals to be brought to Members at the same time as per the agreed process. The updated timeline is as follows:

- August – completion of Stage 2 – Development stage
- September – Member site visits to Stage 2 projects
- October to November – Special AWG meetings and report to SP and R Committee.
- Dec/Jan onwards – Notification of Stage 2 decision. Stage 3 – Delivery initiated.

The Committee is asked to note the background to this £10m fund and the update provided including the updated programme timeline for delivery.

**Financial and Resources Implications**

- 3.7** Finance – NRF Programme has been equality screened.  
Resources – Officer time to deliver as required.

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

- 3.8** **None.”**

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

**Update on Funding – Peace Plus  
and Community Ownership Fund**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

- 1.1** To provide the Committee with an update on the PEACEPLUS Programme, specifically the opening of the calls under Theme 1.1 and Theme 1.4, as well as a request for a letter of support for Development Trust Northern Ireland under the Community Ownership Fund.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked:**

- i. **PEACEPLUS 1.1. Co-designed Local Community Peace Action Plan** – to note that this SEUPB funding stream is now open, closing on 14th December 2023 and further note the approach for development of the capital proposals and that a detailed update will be brought to Committee in August;
- ii. **PEACEPLUS 1.4 Reimaging Communities** – to note that this SEUPB funding stream is now open, closing on 7th September 2023 and that officers are continuing to develop the proposals as previously agreed by the Committee (LGBTQIA+ Hub and Reconnected Belfast);
- iii. **PEACEPLUS** – Request for letters of support and/or request for Council to act as a delivery agent – to note that is likely that the Council will be requested to act as delivery agent and/or provide letters of support for projects being submitted under Theme 1.4 Reimaging Communities. The Committee is asked to note that officers are currently clarifying the implications of this with SEUPB and that an update on requests for support will be brought to Committee in August for consideration; and
- iv. **Community Ownership Fund** – to agree to provide a letter of support to Development Trust Northern Ireland for its proposal under the Community Ownership Fund.

**3.0 Main Report**

**PEACEPLUS PROGRAMME**

- 3.1** The EU PEACEPLUS Programme aims to build prosperity and peace within Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland. The PEACEPLUS Programme has been divided into six themes – each of which aims to address longstanding social, environmental and economic challenges which have and continue to impact our community. Within each theme there are several investment areas – these will have a more specific focus and target organisations such as local authorities or community groups. The PEACEPLUS Programme offers a significant funding opportunity with approx. £1billion of funding available across the 6 themes. The Committee is asked to note that a number of calls have recently opened under the Programme.

**3.2 Theme 1.1 Local Action Plan – Community Regeneration and Transformation (Capital)**

The call for Local Action Plan applications has been opened by SEUPB. The closing date is confirmed as 14 December 2023. Shared City Partnership agreed on 12 June 2023 to an indicative % allocation model on the basis that there is significant work still required to agree specific budget allocations for both Capital and Revenue spend under each project concept area and that this model is subject to change. The allocation for capital was agreed as 40% which is anticipated to be approximately £4.8m for Belfast. It should be noted however that work is still ongoing on refining the % allocations that will be available as further implementation costs may be taken from each of the allocations e.g., depending on the staffing model; each theme may require a dedicated Project Officer for the lifetime of the plan and there will also be animation costs for revenue and capital projects.

The development of the £15.1million Local PEACE Action Plan includes three thematic areas:

- i. Community Regeneration and Transformation (Capital Projects)
- ii. Thriving and Peaceful Communities
- iii. Building Respect for All Cultural Identities

The outworking of the current activity with stakeholders on themes ii and iii will feed into the capital theme (theme i) and is being delivered through the facilitation of Thematic Working Group sessions led via City and Neighbourhoods. The following 11 concept areas are under consideration and the capital proposals will flow from here:

Theme 2 Thriving & Peaceful Communities					
Capacity Building	Health and Wellbeing	Employability	Youth	Sport	Arts
Theme 3 Building Respect for All Cultural Identities					
Ethnic Minority	Ex-Politically motivated prisoners	Cultural & Heritage	LGBTQIA+	Church and Faith	

For Theme 1 (Community Regeneration and Transformation - Capital), an initial assessment of potential projects is underway using consultation from PEACEPLUS and other pipeline capital proposals, these will be tested for alignment to peace outcomes as well as deliverability within the constraints of the funding model. It is likely that under this theme a number of smaller projects will be taken forward at around £500,000 per capital project. Officers are currently undertaking an assessment of potential projects using the parameters and principles that were agreed by the SCP and those required by SEUPB. The capital projects identified will be developed via project specific co-design processes once identified. The Committee is asked to note that an update on proposed projects will be brought to Committee in August. There will also be further engagement with stakeholders as part of the co-design process.

**Key Milestones – Capital Theme**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Key Milestone</b>
June	SEUPB Open Call
June - July	Continuation of development of capital concepts
August	Committee consideration of capital concepts
August/September	Engagement with Stakeholders
<b>December</b>	<b>Action Plan submission to SEUPB</b>
June – July 2024	Letter of Offer received
Autumn 2024	Delivery of local action plan commences

The Committee is asked to note that PEACEPLUS 1.1. Co - designed Local Community Peace Action Plan SEUPB funding stream is now open, closing on 14th December, 2023 and further note the approach for development of the capital proposals.

**3.3 Theme 1.4 Reimagining Communities**

The Committee will recall that, in October 2022, it noted a report on the PEACEPLUS Investment Area 1.4 and agreed to further develop the LGBTQ+ Hub and the Reconnected Belfast (including redevelopment aspects of the Waterworks and Alexandra Park) proposals to ensure their readiness for

application stage. The call for applications has been opened by SEUPB. The closing date for applications under investment area 1.4 is confirmed as 7 September 2023. The Committee is asked to note that officers are continuing to develop the proposals which it had previously agreed. A further update on these will be brought back to the Committee in August.

**3.4 PEACEPLUS Request for the Council to act as delivery agent/provide letters of support**

The Committee is also asked to note that it is likely that the Council will be asked to endorse/provide letters of support for other Peace Plus Theme 1.4 applications and that the Council is also likely to receive requests to act as delivery agent for some projects. The potential implications of this are being checked with SEUPB. The Committee is asked to note that work is underway on a mechanism through which requests for letters of support/ requests for the Council to act as a delivery agent will be assessed with requests to be endorsed by Committee. Given the deadline for applications under this round, this will be brought into the Committee in August.

**3.5 COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP FUND**

The Committee was previously advised that the Community Ownership Fund (COF) was announced by DLUHC on 27 May 2022. The £150 million COF is for communities across the United Kingdom. It has been set up to help communities take ownership of assets at risk of closure with funding supporting the purchase and/or renovation costs of community assets. The Community Ownership Fund is not open to local authorities and is only open voluntary and community organisations. The closing date for the latest round of the Community Ownership Fund is 14th July. The Council has been approached by the Development Trust Northern Ireland (DTNI) who are submitting a proposal to acquire and develop the former synagogue in Annesley Street into a multi-purpose space to include exhibition and cultural space, office space and community engagement space. DTNI is seeking a letter of support from the Council to submit with their proposal. The Committee is asked to agree to submit a letter of support on the basis that there is no financial or other commitment required from the Council.

**3.6 Financial and Resources Implications**

Finance –The PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan and projects under Theme 1.4 will be equality screened.

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**Resources** – Officer time to deliver as required.

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

**None.”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations and delegated authority to officers to approve any additional requests for the Council to provide a letter of support to accompany applications to the Community Ownership Fund, given that the application process would close in mid-July.

**Finance, Procurement and Performance**

**Audit and Risk Panel Annual Report,  
including Annual Governance Statement**

The Committee:

- i. noted the summary of the work of the Audit and Risk Panel during 2022/23;
- ii. approved the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 and, in particular, the disclosure of the significant governance issues contained in the statement; and
- iii. approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel of 13th June.

**Review of Local Authority Property  
Certificate Fees 2023**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 To inform the Committee of a proposed increase in fees for the Local Authority Property Certificates.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

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

**3.0 Main Report**

**Background**

**3.1 The Committee will be aware that The Council Property Certificate system arises from an agreement in the early 1990’s**

between the Law Society (representing solicitors) and local Councils, as a means of ascertaining information, which is useful in legal searches relating to the conveyancing process for land and property. The Council Property Certificate is a series of questions asked about a specific address which, in the Belfast Council area, are coordinated and answered by Building Control with support from Environmental Health.

**Key Issues**

- 3.2 Members may recall that in 2020, councils agreed to increase the Council's Property Certificate fee from £60 to £70 fixed until a further review in 2023.
- 3.3 This review has now been undertaken by officers at a regional level and, given the increasing cost pressures on councils, officers have obtained SOLACE approval for the following proposal.
- 3.4 To mitigate against future inflationary costs to councils, officers have obtained SOLACE approval to the concept of applying a 3-year inflationary fee review cycle meaning a further review would not be required until 2026, unless there were significant changes to the Council Property certificate process. In which case, Councils would reserve the right to review the fees.
- 3.5 Therefore, if we build in an assumption for future rises to Consumer Price Index's (CPI's), along with other increasing cost pressures on councils, officers feel it would be reasonable to propose an increase the Councils Property Certificate fee from £70 to £90, fixed for three years.
- 3.6 This proposed increase would assist councils in maintaining adequate resources to ensure that the service is delivered in a prompt, efficient and professional manner. The slight differential between the Regional Property Certificate and Councils Property Certificate would also address the previous concerns raised by the Law Society that the two fees being the same had sometimes led to confusion in applications from solicitors and agents.
- 3.7 Allowing for establishment of new councils after the forthcoming election, this would increase the fees as outlined below from 1st July 2023:



**3.8 Standard Charges**

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Inflationary cycle added</u>
a) Standard 10-year search	£70	£90
b) Search back to 1973	£95	£122
c) Specified 10-year search	£70	£90
d) Follow-up 10-year search	£30	£38

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.9 There would be significant increase to the income raised but the exact figure will depend on the number of applications received.

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

- 3.10 Officers are not aware of any equality or good relations implications in relation to this report.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

**Building Regulation Fees for  
Applications including Insulation**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the update the Committee on the implementation for the waiving of Building Regulation inspection fees for those applications involving loft insulation which are not part of funded schemes or maintenance contracts, which commenced on 1 December 2023 until 31 May 2023 subject to review.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to decide if:

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- i. the exercise should continue beyond 31st May 2023 for an additional six months; or
- ii. the exercise should cease, on the basis that of the outcomes outlined in the report.

**3.0 Main Report**

**Key Issues and Current Position**

- 3.1 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 8th November agreed to waive Building Regulation inspection fees for those applications involving installation of insulation which were not part of funded schemes or maintenance contracts.
- 3.2 The waiving of fees was implemented from the date of Council ratification on 1st December, 2022 until 31st May, 2023 subject to review.
- 3.3 From 1st December 2023 until 31st May 2023, Building Control staff ran a series of reports, carried out an analysis and identified 95 applicants who they considered may have been eligible for a refund under this initiative. This was similar to the initial scoping analysis carried out and is based upon assessing the application details provided and judging those which fall outside any scheme and maintenance contracts that we are aware of.
- 3.4 A covering letter and a declaration form was issued to each potential eligible applicant.
- 3.5 Out of the 95 letters and declaration forms issued, 11 declaration forms were returned.
- 3.6 Through further investigation:
  - 7 applicants were not due a refund as fees had been paid through a scheme.
  - 4 applicants were eligible for a refund however the insulation was part of multiple works. Once the notional fee of £400 for insulation was deducted from the estimate cost of works the payment made was still due, therefore a refund was not applicable, and applicants were informed in writing.
- 3.7 Using this method of analysis and process to identify and contact any applicants who may have paid the fees outside of a scheme has therefore not resulted in a refund being issued to any applicant.

**Energy Efficiency and Cost of Living Advice**

- 3.8 Building Control has liaised with Corporate Communications and will be putting an article in the summer edition of City Matters (end of June) on the cost of living and energy advice for your home. This article is signing posting to links on Belfast City Council website, NIHE and Energy Saving Trust. A second article is being considered for inclusion in the winter edition, the details of the article are still to be agreed.**

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.9 The method used in attempting to identify those applicants who may have paid their own fees, issuing the documentation and dealing with follow up correspondence is labour intensive and undertaken outside existing duties.**

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

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

The Committee agreed to waive Building Regulation inspection fees for those applications involving loft insulation which were not part of funded schemes or maintenance contracts for a further six months from 31st May, 2023.

**Update on Contracts**

The Committee:

- approved the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a, as detailed in Table 1 below;
- approved the award of Single Tender Actions, in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions, as detailed in Table 2 below;
- approved the modification of the contract, as per Standing Order 37a, detailed in Table 3 below; and
- noted the award of retrospective Single Tender Actions, in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions, as detailed in Table 4 below.

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**Table 1: Competitive Tenders**

<b>Title of Tender</b>	<b>Proposed Contract Duration</b>	<b>Estimated Total Contract Value</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Short description of goods / services</b>
Provision of temporary agency workers	Up to 2 years	Up to £8m	C Sheridan	The provision of a wide range of temporary agency workers to support business operations across the Council.
Contract for Placement of Planning Notices in the local press  *Previously approved Sept 2022 for £120,000 but has now been reviewed	Up to 5 years	Up to £125,000	K Bentley	Fulfilment of statutory obligation to advertise planning notices under Article 8 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015
Laptops, docking stations and other peripherals	Up to 1 year	Up to £500,000	P Gribben	New devices to facilitate hybrid working and replacement devices as per regular business as usual replacement cycle
T2345 Design Contest to support the delivery of Belfast Imagining 2024  *Previously approved Oct 2022 for £1.85m but revised total now £2.7m	Up to 22 months	Up to £2.7m	J Greer	A Design Contest process to seek out project proposals for the year of culture through a competitive and 3 staged process that will lead to a series of civic and culturally led programmes, events and projects for 2024 totalling £2.7million which has been allocated from the cultural reserve for 2024.

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Provision of animal healthcare services	Up to 5 years	Up to £400,000	J Greer	Belfast Zoo requires a veterinary service to provide an essential service for the health and welfare of the zoo's valuable collections of animals
Supply of trees	Up to 3 years	Up to £80,000	D Sales	Tender is required to ensure the Council has a sufficient supply of large ornamental trees for the next 3 years
AutoDesk software licenses and support, to include bi-annual technology updates	Up to 3 years	Up to £96,000	P Gribben	AutoDesk software is licensed on an annual subscription basis meaning the current AutoDesk software in use by BCC will no longer be available after 30.11.2023 without a new contract. The software is currently in use by Facilities Management, Building Control, Parks Landscape and the Project Management Unit
T2438 NIESS Enquiry Call Handling Service  *Previously approved £125,000 but have been reviewed	Up to 4 years	Up to £500,000	J Greer	Enquiry call handling service required to receive and process client enquires related to the NI Enterprise Support Service.
Provision of St Patrick's Day Festival Events	Up to 3 years	Up to £900,000	J Greer	Creative sector to deliver St Patrick's Day events on behalf of the Council, as part

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				of wider programme of activity
Delivery of Belfast Stories up to end of RIBA Stage 2	Up to 16 months	Up to £200,00	W Langham	Belfast Stories is due to enter next phase of development up to the end of RIBA Stage 2. This will include the completion of public consultation, consumer market testing and commencement of story collection programme. Engagement and communications support is required across all of these strands
Drain clearance services	Up to 4 years	Up to £200,000	S Grimes	Drain clearance services including the provision of an emergency 24-hour call-out service, camera surveys, regular inspection and emptying of waste from septic tanks, grease traps and road gullies.
Reroof and replace 16 roof lights at 7th floor Cecil Ward Building	Up to 4 weeks	Up to £80,000	S Grimes	Urgent replacement and repair services required
Collection and treatment/recycling of paints and varnishes	Up to 4 years	Up to £865,000	C Matthews	To support waste management operations using a specialist and suitable licenced service provider.
Complete energy audits of four high use Council buildings –	6 months initially	Up to £50,000	J Tully	Energy audits of four high use Council buildings to inform

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City Hall, Cecil Ward, Adelaide and Duncrue				next steps on energy reduction plan
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**Table 2: Single Tender Actions**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Total Value</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>
Mercedes Benz Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) approved parts and components, warranty support and specialist repairs	Up to 4 years	Up to £60,000	C Matthews	<p>To ensure that the OEM approved engineering parts and components are replaced and fitted to Mercedes Benz vehicles in keeping with the manufacturer warranty, operational safety terms and conditions.</p> <p>A recent tender (T2323) was issued to the market via open competition. The tender competition closed on 05 May 2023 with no bids received for this requirement. A direct award/ STA is a fully compliant procurement route in these circumstances as per Reg 32 (a) of the Public Contracts Regulations.</p> <p>Mercedes Benz Truck and Van Commercial dealership based in</p>	Mercedes Benz Truck & Van

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				Mallusk is the only authorised OEM dealership in NI with exclusive rights.	
Visit Belfast out of state marketing for the Belfast Maritime Festival 2023	Up to 4 months	Up to £40,000	J Greer	There is currently a formalised agreement with Visit Belfast to act as our marketing partner. This is a short-term additional requirement specifically for out of state events marketing to attract visitors to stay and to spend during the festival time.	Visit Belfast
T1896 – Collection and treatment of paints and varnishes	Up to 6 months	Up to £108,000	C Matthews	This service was included as a Lot within the recent tender (T2310) for treatment of mixed waste from recycling centres. This lot was not awarded as no suitable tenders were received during the tender competition. Continuity of service required with the incumbent service provider whilst a review of the service is conducted and the re-tender process completed.	Irish Waste Services



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MTC small engineering and metalwork cover	Up to 6 months	Up to £75,000	S Grimes	The extension to this contract to the end of December 2023 with the incumbent contractor WJM Building Services Ltd is required to allow the unit to update the tender documentation and complete a new procurement exercise.	WJM Building Services Ltd
MTC mechanical services cover	Up to 2 months	Up to £100,000	S Grimes	STA required to ensure continuity of service until re-tender process. This will ensure the incumbent contractor can continue to carry out essential services including callouts, repairs and planned maintenance until the new contract is in place.	WJM Building Services Ltd

**Table 3: Modification to Contract**

<b>Title of Contract</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Modification</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>
T1980a Enterprise Pathway Programme  *Request is retrospective	Up to 18 months	Additional 7 months	J Greer	Contract had previously been extended to 28th February 2023, however requesting an additional extension to 30th September 2023.	North City Business Centre

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				Re-engage is required with all previous participants to gain an update on business support requirements for those who are trading as well as providing additional support for individuals who may have not been able to progress at that time.	
T1914 - Supply and delivery of a range of fruit and vegetables to the Catering Unit	Up to 54 months	Up to additional 3 months and up to an additional £10,000	N Largey	<p>An extension for 3 months to support a local supplier and recoup the loss of income due to the continued closure of catering services and the canteen.</p> <p>A previous extension was approved in 2021 for an 18-month extension due to Covid the catering service and canteen continued to be suspended during that time.</p>	North Down Group

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**Table 4: Retrospective Single Tender Actions**

<b>Title of Contract</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>
Consultant to undertake stakeholder engagement to develop overarching vision for Waterworks and Alexandra Park	Up to 3 months	Up to £43,200	S Grimes	Engagement to be undertaken to inform BCC's Reconnected Belfast Bid to PeacePlus	Urban Scale Interventions
Supply of an advertising package in the NI4Kids magazine	Up to 3 years	Up to £32,000	J Greer	NI4Kids is the only monthly magazine in NI which targets parents of children under 12, allowing BCC to inform them each month about different products and tailored information about the zoo	NI4Kids
T1896 – Collection and treatment of paints and varnishes	Up to 4 months	Up to £72,000	C Matthews	This service was included as a Lot within the recent tender (T2310) for treatment of mixed waste from recycling centres. This lot was not awarded as no suitable tenders were received during the tender competition.	Irish Waste Services

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				Continuity of service required with the incumbent service provider whilst a review of the service is conducted and the re-tender process completed.	
MTC small engineering and metalwork cover*	Up to 3 months	Up to £37,500	S Grimes	Essential services required to be covered until the new tender is in place.	WJM Building Services Ltd
MTC Mechanical services cover*	Up to 10 months	Up to £500,000	S Grimes	Essential services required to be covered until the new tender is in place.	WJM Building Services Ltd

\* **Please note** - These 2 x STAs are exceptions from Standing Orders relating to contracts as allowed under 56 exceptions, where

(a) by direction of the Council acting on a recommendation of a Chief Officer that the exception is justified in special circumstances

**Equality and Good Relations**

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

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Shared City Partnership of 12th June, including the recommendations:

**PEACEPLUS**

- to agree to the indicative % allocation model, on the basis that there was significant work still required to agree specific budget allocations for both Capital and Revenue spend under each project concept area and that this model was subject to change; and

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- to note the updated process Stage 2 development of the Local Action Plan.

**PEACE IV**

**CYP Theme**

- to note the modifications considered and agreed through the Programme Board, via delegated authority, during the pre-election period (April and May 2023), as follows:

**CYP 1**

**Belfast Metropolitan College (Tech Connects)**

- to extend contact hours threshold to 20 hours and agree completion of the project based on 50% achievement;

**Tech Connects IT Equipment reallocation to agree:**

- to keep the EOIs application open, on a rolling basis, until all equipment was allocated; and
- to extend the applications to all groups which participated in the PEACE IV programme.

**SSS Theme**

- to extend the Network Scheme – Capital Works to 11th August 2023, to enable for delivery/closure, payments and finalisation of contracts; and
- to extend the period for delivery of FMCG signage to 31st December' 2023.

**BPR Theme**

- to note the report and level of achievement for the BPR Theme.

**GOOD RELATIONS**

**Good Relations Action Plan 2023/24, Reduced Budget Reprofile and response to The Executive Office and Spending Plans for 2023-2024**

- to agree the approach for reprofiling the reduced Good Relations budget, note the concerns raised and the contents of the EQIA report.

### **Update on TEO Asylum Full Dispersal Fund**

- to agree the approach for reprofiling costs in relation to the Asylum Dispersal Fund.

### **Membership of Shared City Partnership**

- to approve the approach to membership, Council officers to submit a report to the Partnership meeting in August on how to nominate members from the business sector and to note that it was agreed that, in relation to the vacancy in representation from the community/voluntary sector in North, it be advertised as previously, with networks and groups being contacted for expressions of interest.

### **Diversity Action Plans**

The Committee considered the following report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

- 1.1 To ask the Committee to agree the budget and appropriate resources for the implementation of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and LGBT+ Action Plan Year 3 activities.**

#### **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the proposed diversity action plans and associated year 3 costs.**

#### **3.0 Main Report**

- 3.1 The Council's Equality and Diversity Action Plan outlines how it will promote equality and diversity in our ambitions to create a city in which people love to live, learn, invest, work and visit. It also contributes to our compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Actions are categorised under the following corporate plan priorities:**

- Growing an inclusive economy
- Living here
- Cross cutting
- Organisational priorities

- 3.2 As part of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan the Council has committed to developing and delivering a Gender Action Plan, LGBT+ Action Plan and a Race Equality Action Plan.**

**Gender Action Plan (GAP)**

- 3.3 Gender inequalities are deeply embedded in our social, economic and cultural systems. There is overwhelming evidence that women disproportionately experience disadvantage and discrimination, a reflection of historical unaddressed inequality, but also that inequalities have been exacerbated by austerity, welfare reform and by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Statistics affirm the persistence of gendered inequalities, which continue to inhibit women's life opportunities in Northern Ireland. Men will benefit from gender equality as they too face gender-specific issues such as lower life expectancy, bad health, lower education levels and are impacted negatively by rigid gender norms.
- 3.4 The GAP (21-24) was agreed by the Council in July 21 following consultation with Women's Steering Group (WSG) the Women's Network and a wider group of staff that attended a Gender Inequalities workshop in January 2021.
- 3.5 Year 2 achievements / projects delivered include:
- Held annual International Women's Day event in City Hall
  - Funding provided for external International Women's Day event in city centre
  - Participation in the NI Gender Diversity Charter assessment- retained Silver level accreditation
  - Women's Leaders Programme delivered - 5 elected members and 17 officers participated
  - Implemented Menopause Policy and Guidance and established a Menopause Support Group
  - Delivered free and reusable period product pilots
  - Onus Domestic Violence Charter (employer award) – retained Platinum level
  - Onus Safe City Accreditation - retained
  - Ongoing support for the Raise Your Voice Project to help address misogyny, sexual harassment and violence
  - Transgender awareness raising and support events
  - Provision of upskilling academies in low paid sector (childcare, health care etc)
  - Progress on construction of Shankill Shared Women's Centre
- 3.6 Year 3 of the current GAP (23/24) has been updated, costed and is being presented to Committee for approval. It is attached at Appendix One. In addition to the financial resources required,

the plan also identifies the role that individual business units and departments have in delivery of the plan.

#### **LGBT+ Action Plan**

- 3.7 The LGBT+ Action Plan (21-24) was agreed by the Council in July 21 following consultation with the Proud Staff Network and senior LGBT+ champions. It has been developed to ensure that our organisational culture and working environment allows staff to feel comfortable to be their whole selves at work and that policies and practices empower talent development at all levels and the removal of any form of discrimination. It also aims to increase the understanding of the wider workforce of issues facing the LGBT+ communities. Year 2 achievements / projects delivered include:

- LGBT+ inclusion and awareness training
- Trans awareness training
- Understanding and reflecting the experiences of LGBTQ people with disabilities
- Peer and reverse mentoring - staff network / allies including senior champion
- Bi identity awareness training
- Continued promotion, visibility and growth of staff network
- Continued engagement with sector and support for external events
- Staff and family Pride Walk
- Participation in Pride 2022
- TDOR event in City Hall
- The display of Rainbow and Trans flags and lighting up of City Hall.
- Achieved Silver Award in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index

- 3.8 Year 3 of the current LGBT+ plan (23/24) has been updated, costed and is being presented to Committee for approval. It is attached at Appendix 2. In addition to the financial resources required, the plan also identifies the role that individual business units and departments have in delivery of the plan.

#### **Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (WEI)**

- 3.9 We have participated in the WEI since 2019 and were awarded Silver Level accreditation in 2023, having previously attained Gold Level in 2022. Following detailed feedback from Stonewall on our 2023 submission, we have incorporated recommended actions into our 2023/24 action plan where appropriate.



- 3.10 There was a marked decrease in the number of organisations taking part in the WEI this year, with a reduction of approximately 50% against the previous year. Stonewall has advised that in many cases, organisations will take a year out of the WEI process to reassess and progress the required improvements. It is therefore proposed that the Council does not participate in the WEI this year and uses the time and resources to make the required improvements and the delivery of our planned programme of activities. The staff network 'Proud' is content with this proposal on the basis that efforts and resources are redirected into delivery of the action plan.
- 3.11 Stonewall has informed us that it intends to carry out of a review of the WEI this year. We have informed Stonewall that we would be keen to feed into that review.

#### Disability Action Plan

- 3.12 The Committee should also note that the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 ('DDA') Section 49 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons, and to the need to encourage participation by disabled persons in public life. The Equality and Diversity Unit is in the process of reviewing and revising the Disability Action Plan.

#### Race Action Plan

- 3.13 The Director of City and Organisational Strategy, as Executive Sponsor for Race, has been leading on the development of the Race Equality Action Plan. The development of the plan has considered how we deliver our services and actions that we can take as an employer to create a more diverse workforce, and as a city leader, to influence and bring about change.
- 3.14 The draft action plan is currently with an external expert who we have asked to act as a 'critical friend' before further consultation progresses.

#### Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.15 The cost of delivery of the proposed Gender Action Plan year 3 activities is estimated at £36,000.
- 3.16 The cost of delivery of the LGBT+ Action Plan year 2 is estimated at £9300. Both plans will be met from the existing Organisational Development budget.

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**Human Resources**

- 3.17 The plan also identifies the role that individual business units and departments have in delivery of the plan.

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

- 3.18 The delivery of the Gender and the LGBT+ Action Plans will result in positive outcomes. The promotion of equality and diversity entails more than the elimination of discrimination, it requires proactive action. The actions contained within both plans will not only impact on internal operations but also have a positive impact externally on women and men and the LGBT+ community in our city.”

The Committee approved the Gender Action Plan 2021 - 24 (Year 3) [here](#) and the LGBT+ Action Plan 2021 24 (Year 3) [here](#) and associated costs.

**Operational Issues**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum of 15th June.

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

The Committee adopted the recommendations in respect of those applications received up to 9th June, as set out below:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
<b>2023 EVENTS</b>						
Special Olympics Ulster	24 July 2023	<b>Welcome Reception after World Summer Games 2023</b> to celebrate the athletes and their achievements.  Numbers attending 150	C	No charge as charity	Yes, Drinks reception as sporting achievement	Approve No Charge Drinks Reception  <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer.</i>

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Conradh na Gaeilge	31 July 2023	<b>130 years celebration of Conradh na Gaeilge</b> – reception, entertainment and speeches celebrating this anniversary.  Numbers attending 50 – 100	C	No charge as charity	Yes, Drinks reception as anniversary	Approve No Charge Drinks Reception  <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer.</i>
Belfast One BID	20 August 2023	<b>Belfast One-Way Edit Fashion Show</b> - Reception and showcase of 50 city centre retailers  Numbers attending 350	B	Yes £300	No hospitality	Approve Charge £300 No hospitality
TIMCOM (recycling wooden pallets and packing)	7 September 2023	<b>Annual Meeting Drinks Reception and Dinner</b> to enable a networking opportunity for local members to meet with others within the industry from all across the UK as first event in Belfast.  Numbers attending 50 – 100	B & D	No charge as not for profit	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

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Action Cancer	10 October 2023	<b>50th Anniversary Celebration lunch</b> for volunteers and work of Action Cancer.  Numbers attending 100	C	No charge as charity	Yes, Drinks reception as achievement	Approve No Charge Drinks Reception  <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer.</i>
British Red Cross	23 October 2023	<b>Our Stories – Our Times: Celebration</b> event reflecting on the History of the British Red Cross in Northern Ireland.  Numbers attending 250	C	No charge as charity	Yes, Drinks reception as achievement	Approve No Charge Drinks Reception  <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer.</i>
Crusaders Football Club	25 November 2023	<b>Crusaders Football Club 125th Anniversary Celebration-</b> Drinks Reception, Dinner and entertainment.  Numbers attending – 200	C & D	No Charge as voluntary organisation	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No Charge Wine Reception  <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for wine on arrival</i>
British Council of Northern Ireland	30 November 2023	<b>Mock COP28</b> The debate engages students from approx. 30 schools in Northern Ireland to debate live and topical COP27 issues	B & D	No (Charity)	No	Recommend to approve, No charge, No hospitality

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		through a climate negotiation simulation.				
		Numbers attending – 130				
<b>2024 EVENTS</b>						
International Conference on Integrated Care	23 April 2024	<b>Conference Gala dinner</b> for guests attending their 3 day congress taking place in ICC  Numbers attending – 350	A &B	No (Waiver as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
Young Enterprise NI	25 April 2024	<b>YEA NI Awards 2024</b> Drinks reception, dinner and Awards Ceremony to celebrate the achievements of people across NI who completed YE Programmes.  Numbers attending – 300	C	No (Charity)	Approve No Charge No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
Gort na móna GAA Club	1 June 2024	<b>Gort na móna GAA Club 50th Anniversary Celebration-</b> Drinks Reception, Dinner and entertainment.	C & D	No Charge as voluntary organisation	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No Charge Wine Reception  <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for</i>

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		Numbers attending – 320				<i>wine on arrival</i>
Moloney and Kelly	13 September 2024	<b>Welcome Dinner for US company Colonial Electric Supply -</b> Drinks Reception, Dinner and Entertainment for company employees who have won a 3 day incentive trip to Ireland.  Numbers attending – 320	A &B	Charge £825	No hospitality	Approve Charge £825 No hospitality
Irish Society of Surgical Pathology	4 October 2024	<b>Conference Gala dinner</b> for delegates attending their 3-day conference taking place in QUB.  Numbers attending – 120	A &B	Charge £825	No hospitality	Approve Charge £825 No hospitality
BSSH (British Society for Surgery of the Hand)	14 November 2024	<b>BSSH Autumn Scientific Meeting –</b> Dinner for guests attending their 2 day congress taking place in ICC  Numbers attending - 230	A &B	No (Waiver as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

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**Requests for the use of the City  
Hall Grounds for Events - Summer 2023**

The Committee's attention was drawn to the following requests for the use of the front lawns of the City Hall in 2023:

**Féile Rocks Pride Concert**

This event would take place on 29th July and feature local young and emerging bands from all sections of the community.

**Beat on the Street**

This event, which would take place on 16th September, would be organised by the Beat Carnival Centre and include family fun entertainment, with a music stage, activities and performers.

**Poetry Jukebox**

A poetry jukebox, featuring twenty poems by internationally renowned poets, would be located in the grounds from 2nd October to 6th November to coincide with the Belfast International Arts Festival 2023.

The Committee approved the requests and noted that each organiser would be required to submit an event management plan and risk assessment in advance of their event.

In addition, the Committee granted delegated authority to the Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal Services to approve a request to erect a boxing ring in the grounds of the City Hall on 1st August for a warmup type session, as part of Féile An Phobail, subject to all the usual conditions being met.

**Request to Record Drone Footage of Council Sites  
and other City Centre Landmark Buildings**

The Committee granted approval for a licensed operator to record drone footage of a number of Council buildings and events over four days, beginning on 29th July and continuing into the following week, to be used in future internal and external videos.

Chairperson