

Council

MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Monday, 4th September, 2017
at 6.00 o'clock p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister) (Chairperson); the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); the High Sheriff (Alderman Haire); Aldermen Convery, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, McKee, L. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Austin, Beattie, Bell, Boyle, Bunting, Campbell, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McCabe, McConville, McVeigh, Mullan, Nicholl, O'Donnell, O'Hara, O'Neill, Reynolds and Walsh.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Aldermen Browne and R. Patterson and Councillors Corr Johnston, Craig, McAteer, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McReynolds, Milne and Newton.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Minutes of the Council

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister),
Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland) and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the special meetings of the Council of 1st July and 2nd August and the monthly meeting of the Council of 3rd July, omitting the decision of the special meeting of 2nd August, under the heading "Notice of Motion – Removal of Bonfire Materials", which, in accordance with Standing Order 47 and Section 41(1) (b) of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 has been called in, be taken as read and signed as correct.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th September, 2017**

Request to Film Proceedings

The Chief Executive reported that a request had been received from a broadcasting company to film the meeting.

The Council agreed to accede to the request.

Official Announcements

The Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, expressed condolences to Alderman McKee on the recent death of his grandmother.

The High Sheriff, Alderman Haire, referred to the recent announcement that the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge were expecting their third child and, on behalf of the Council, congratulated the Royal Couple.

At the request of Alderman Kingston, the Council extended its best wishes to the Northern Ireland football team who would, later in the evening, be hosting the Czech Republic in a World Cup qualifying game.

Change of Membership on Outside Bodies

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from the SDLP of the following changes to membership on Outside Bodies:

- Councillor Heading to replace Alderman Convery on the National Association of Councillors;
- Councillor McCusker to replace Alderman Convery on the North Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership;
- Councillor McCusker to replace Councillor Boyle on the Active Belfast Limited Board;
- Councillor Lyons to replace Councillor Boyle on the South Belfast Partnership Board, the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership and the South Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership; and
- Councillor Lyons to replace Councillor Mullan on the Lagan Canal Restoration Trust and the Lyric Theatre Education Advisory Panel.

The Council approved the changes.

Request to Address the Council

The Chief Executive reported that a request had been received from Mr. E. Duffy from the organisation Birth Mothers and their Children for Justice NI to address the Council in the context of the motion which Councillor O'Neill would be proposing later in the meeting on Mother and Baby Homes.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th September, 2017**

The Council agreed to accede to the request and Mr. Duffy was welcomed to the meeting.

Mr. Duffy outlined the extent of the human rights violations which had been experienced by those women and their babies who had, over the years, been detained across Ireland in institutions such as mother and baby homes and hostels. He highlighted the role which Birth Mothers and their Children for Justice NI played in supporting the victims and survivors and urged the Council to support its call for a Public Inquiry or similar investigation to be initiated in Northern Ireland into former mother and baby institutions.

Mr. Duffy was thanked by the Lord Mayor and he left the meeting.

The Council noted the information which had been provided and that it would have an opportunity to discuss the issue later in the meeting.

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Councillor Hargey,
Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 18th August be approved and adopted.

Declarations of Interest

The Council agreed that the minute of the meeting of 18th August under the heading "Declarations of Interest" be amended to reflect that Councillor Howard, rather than Councillor Graham, had declared that she was a member of the Belfast Strategic Partnership Lifelong Learning Group.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendment, the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 18th August were approved and adopted.

People and Communities Committee

Moved by Alderman Sandford,
Seconded by Alderman Rodgers,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 2nd and 8th August be approved and adopted.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th September, 2017**

**Requests for Items to be taken
back for Further Consideration**

**Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre –
Proposed Possession**

At the request of Alderman McKee, the Chairperson, with the consent of the Council, agreed that the minute of the meeting of 8th August under the heading “Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre – Proposed Possession” be taken back to the Committee for further consideration.

**East Belfast Football Club - Request to Install
Temporary Hospitality Room on Council Land**

Councillor Dorrian requested that the Chairperson agree to the minute of the meeting of 8th August under the heading “East Belfast Football Club – Request to Install Temporary Hospitality Room on Council Land” being taken back to the Committee for further consideration.

The Chairperson agreed to accede to the request, however, it was declined by the Council.

Amendment

**East Belfast Football Club - Request to Install
Temporary Hospitality Room on Council Land**

Moved by Councillor Dorrian,
Seconded by Councillor Reynolds,

That the decision of the People and Communities Committee of 8th August, under the heading “East Belfast Football Club – Request to Install Temporary Hospitality Room on Council Land”, be referred back to the Committee for further consideration.

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

**Acknowledgement of Thanks –
Donation for the Purchase of Defibrillators**

At the request of the Chairperson, the Council agreed that the Lord Mayor forward to the family of the late Mr. Mark Murphy a letter thanking them for their generous donation, which would allow defibrillators to be placed in additional public accessed parks and playing fields.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th September, 2017**

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing omission and addition, the minutes of the meetings of the People and Communities Committee of 2nd and 8th August were approved and adopted.

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

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

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

Licensing Committee

Moved by Alderman Spence,
Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson and

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

Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Lyons,
Seconded by Councillor Armitage and

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

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

Moved by Councillor Walsh,
Seconded by Councillor Johnston and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee of 1st August be approved and adopted.

Notices of Motion

Mother and Baby Homes

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor O'Neill proposed:

"This Council recognises the citizens of Belfast's commitment to human rights and will support Amnesty International's call on The Northern Ireland Executive to set-up a human rights-compliant public inquiry into allegations

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th September, 2017**

of forced labour, arbitrary detention, ill treatment and the illegal adoption of babies in former mother and baby homes in Belfast and across the province."

The motion was seconded by Councillor McVeigh.

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

Grass Cutting on Carriageways

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Alderman Rodgers proposed:

"This Council calls upon the Department for Infrastructure, Transport Northern Ireland, to redirect resources towards grass cutting of verges, central reservations and roundabouts on our carriageways.

The present two cuts between April and September are not sufficient, bearing in mind that only a few years ago we had five and prior to that eight.

The citizens of Belfast, along with a large number of visitors, are complaining bitterly at how unsightly the capital city of Northern Ireland has become and, therefore, it is important that this important issue is acted upon as quickly as possible."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Johnston.

At the request of Councillor Long, the proposer agreed to amend his motion to provide for the deletion of the first two paragraphs, the insertion of the words "of grass cutting" after the words "important issue" in the third paragraph and the insertion of the following wording at the end of the motion: "The Council requests officers to draw up options to see what measures the Council can introduce to mitigate the reduction in grass cutting and bring a report to the appropriate Committee in November to ensure that action is taken before the next grass cutting season.

The proposer agreed, at the request of Councillor Bell, to amend his motion further to provide for the deletion of the word 'therefore' in the third paragraph and the inclusion immediately thereafter of the following wording "that, importantly, there are serious health and safety concerns in many areas where 'line of sight' is impaired for both motorists and pedestrians."

Accordingly, the Council agreed to pass the following motion, as amended, which had been proposed by Alderman Rodgers and seconded by Councillor Johnston:

"The citizens of Belfast, along with a large number of visitors, are complaining bitterly at how unsightly the capital city of Northern Ireland has become and that, importantly, there are serious health and safety concerns in many areas where 'line of sight' is impaired for both motorists and pedestrians. It is important that this important issue of grass cutting is acted upon as quickly as possible.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th September, 2017**

The Council requests officers to draw up options to see what measures the Council can introduce to mitigate the reduction in grass cutting and bring a report to the appropriate Committee in November to ensure that action is taken before the next grass cutting season.”

Party Leaders’ Forum

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

“This Council calls upon the Chief Executive to submit a report to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on how to ensure openness and transparency with regard to decisions taken by the Party Leaders’ Forum.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor O’Neill.

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

**Invitations to or from the President
of the United States of America**

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

“This Council reiterates that it is committed to treating everyone fairly, with equality and respect, and through doing so help our City in its transition from a period of division caused by conflict to a City that celebrates diversity and pluralism.

The Council notes the recent comments made by President Trump regarding the tragic events in Charlottesville, Virginia, their lack of clarity and his failure to condemn racist organisations such as the Ku Klux Klan and Neo Nazi gangs. While recognising with gratitude the support provided by previous American administrations, this Council believes our core values of equality and respect to be at odds with the actions and statements of the current President of the United States of America.

As such, the Council agrees to write, through its Lord Mayor and First Citizen, to the British Prime Minister to request that any invitation, present or future, to the President of the United States, Donald Trump, to visit Britain or Northern Ireland is withdrawn or excluded from consideration.

The Council is also aware that an invitation is traditionally extended to the Lord Mayor to attend the St. Patrick’s Day celebrations at the White House, Washington DC, each year and requests that, in the event of this invitation being extended again in 2018 and in subsequent years, the Lord Mayor, subsequent Lord Mayors, or any other representatives of the Council, consider declining such an invitation to visit the White House or any state event at which the current US President is anticipated to be in attendance.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Attwood.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th September, 2017**

Amendment

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

That the motion, as proposed by Councillor Heading, be amended to provide for the replacement of the words “notes” and “recent” with the words “condemns” and “inconsistent” in the first sentence of the second paragraph, the insertion of the word “initial” before the word “failure” in that sentence and the deletion of the second sentence of the second paragraph and of paragraphs three and four.

At the request of Alderman Kingston, Councillor Long agreed to alter his amendment to include the following wording at the end of the final paragraph: “This Council recognises and strongly values the special relationship between the United States of America and Northern Ireland. We cherish the close historic, ancestral, cultural, economic, educational and political ties that we share with the United States.”

On a recorded vote, thirty-eight Members voted for the amendment which had been proposed by Councillor Long, as revised and as set out below, and eleven against and it was declared carried:

“This Council reiterates that it is committed to treating everyone fairly, with equality and respect, and through doing so help our City in its transition from a period of division caused by conflict to a City that celebrates diversity and pluralism.

The Council condemns the inconsistent comments made by President Trump regarding the tragic events in Charlottesville, Virginia, their lack of clarity and his initial failure to condemn racist organisations such as the Ku Klux Klan and Neo Nazi gangs.

“This Council recognises and strongly values the special relationship between the United States of America and Northern Ireland. We cherish the close historic, ancestral, cultural, economic, educational and political ties that we share with the United States.”

<u>For 38</u>	<u>Against 11</u>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister); The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire); Aldermen Convery, Kingston, McCoubrey, L. Patterson, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Austin, Beattie, Bell, Boyle, Campbell, Carson, Clarke, Corr, Dorrian, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, Kyle, Long,	The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); Aldermen McGimpsey and Rodgers; and Councillors Attwood, Bunting, Collins, Dudgeon, Heading, Johnston, Lyons and Walsh.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th September, 2017**

Magee, Magennis, McCabe, McConville, McVeigh, Mullan, Nicholl, O'Donnell, O'Hara, O'Neill and Reynolds.	
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The motion, as amended, was thereupon put to the meeting as the substantive motion and passed.

Cuts to Health Budgets

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

"This Council notes that Health and Social Care Trusts have been tasked by the Department of Health to find £70 million of savings in 2017/2018 financial year and that the Belfast Trust will have to impose cuts of £26.3 million.

The Council expresses its deep concern at the effect which these proposed cuts will have on domiciliary care, elective care services, nursing and residential homes, the deferral of drug treatments and cuts in agency staff. The Council believes that these cuts will have a devastating impact on the sick, elderly and most vulnerable sections of our community in Belfast.

The Council strenuously opposes these cuts and agrees to write to and seek urgent meetings with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the Permanent Secretary in the Department of Health."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Kyle.

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

Opposition to Britain First Organisation

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

"This Council notes recent attempts by Britain First to organise in Belfast. The Council condemns Britain First for its far-right ideas and is opposed to its attempts to organise here. The city of Belfast has a proud history of anti-racism and anti-fascism. Unfortunately, Belfast has seen a worrying rise of racist incidents in recent years. The establishment of far-right organisations such as Britain First will embolden those who espouse such racism. The Council pledges to stand by its minority communities and against those who wish to promote division and hatred."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Heading.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th September, 2017**

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Dudgeon,
Seconded by Alderman McGimpsey,

That the motion, as proposed by Councillor Collins, be amended to provide for the deletion of everything but the last sentence of the motion and, accordingly, to read as follows: "This Council pledges to stand by its minority communities and against those who wish to promote division and hatred."

Councillor Bunting

At this point in the meeting, it was

Moved by Councillor McVeigh,
Seconded by Councillor Hargey,

That, in accordance with Standing Order 31(a), Councillor Bunting be not further heard.

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

On a recorded vote, fourteen Members voted for the amendment, as proposed by Councillor Dudgeon, and twenty-seven against and it was declared lost.

<u>For 14</u>	<u>Against 27</u>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire); Aldermen McGimpsey, L. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Bunting, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Graham, Hussey, Johnston and Reynolds.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister); and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Austin, Beattie, Bell, Campbell, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Howard, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McConville, McVeigh, Mullan, Nicholl, O'Donnell, O'Hara, O'Neill and Walsh.

The original motion, as proposed by Councillor Collins and seconded by Councillor Heading, was thereupon put to the meeting when, on a recorded vote, forty-one Members voted for and one against and it was declared carried.

**Meeting of Council,
Monday, 4th September, 2017**

<u>For 41</u>	<u>Against 1</u>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor McAllister); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Copeland); The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire); Aldermen McGimpsey, L. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Austin, Beattie, Bell, Campbell, Carson, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Howard, Hussey, Johnston, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McConville, McVeigh, Mullan, Nicholl, O'Donnell, O'Hara, O'Neill, Reynolds and Walsh.	Councillor Bunting.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson