

Council

MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Monday, 1st July, 2019
at 6.45 o'clock p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane) (Chairperson); the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); the High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Copeland, Haire, Kingston, McCoubrey and Rodgers; and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, de Faoite, Dorrian, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hanvey, Hargey, Heading, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Kyle, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, Murphy, Newton, Nicholl, O'Hara, Pankhurst, Verner, Walsh and Whyte.

Summons

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman Spence and Councillors Donnelly, Groogan, Long and Smyth.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Murphy declared an interest in relation to the decision of the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st June, under the heading "Financial Reporting Quarter 4", in that he was on the Board of the Ligoniel Improvement Association, which provided accommodation to the Belfast City Wide Tribunal Service. As the matter did not become the subject of debate, he was not required to leave the meeting.

Minutes of the Council

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane),
Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds) and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the annual meeting of the Council of 21st May be taken as read and signed as correct.

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Official Announcements

Expressions of Sympathy

The Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, extended his condolences to Alderman Kingston on the death of his mother, Marion.

At the request of Councillor Hutchinson, the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council extended his condolences to the family of Mr. Ricky O’Rawe who had in the past provided consultancy support to the Council.

Mr. Stephen McCrory

The Lord Mayor pointed out that this would be the last meeting which would be attended by Mr. Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager, as he was due to retire at the end of July after completing thirty-nine years’ service in Local Government.

He, together with a number of Members, highlighted the significant contribution which Mr. McCrory had made to the democratic process and the work of the Council generally and wished him well in his retirement.

Congratulations

At the request of Councillor Lyons, the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, congratulated Belfast poet and Freeman of the City, Mr. Michael Longley, on his forthcoming eightieth birthday.

Councillor de Faoite congratulated the parents of pupils attending Harding Memorial Primary School who had voted overwhelmingly in favour of pursuing integrated status and wished everyone associated with the school well for the remainder of the transformation process and beyond.

At the request of Alderman Rodgers, the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, congratulated the Irish Men’s International Bowls Team on winning the 2019 British Isles International Team Championship.

Councillor McKeown congratulated Rosario Youth Football Club, following the recent announcement of its innovative partnership agreement with St. Mirren Football Club, and wished both clubs well for the future.

Anniversary

The Council noted, at the request of Councillor Flynn that, on the previous weekend, the world had marked the fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of the Stonewall Riots in New York.

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Requests to Address the Council

Save Our Sunflower Campaign

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that a request had been received from Mr. J. Whyte Jnr. to address the Council in advance of the motion on the Save Our Sunflower Campaign which Councillor D. Baker would be proposing later in the meeting.

The Council approved the request and Mr. J. Whyte Jnr. and Mr. J. Whyte Snr., of the Save Our Sunflower campaign, together with Ms. A. McIlwaine, representing the Anthony Nolan Trust, were welcomed by the Lord Mayor.

Mr. Whyte Jnr. informed the Council that his sister, Mrs. Sharon Whyte McCloskey, a mother of three boys, had, in February, been diagnosed with leukaemia. His sister had been advised by consultants that, in order to fight the disease, she would require a stem cell transplant. However, because she had a rare tissue type, it would be difficult to find a suitable donor. He and his brother had been tested as potential donors but both had been found to be incompatible.

He explained that he had been disappointed to learn that, at that point, only 2% of people in the United Kingdom and Ireland had signed up to the stem cell donation register. That had inspired Mrs. Whyte McCloskey's family and friends to establish the Save Our Sunflower campaign in order to increase awareness of the register and to encourage as many people as possible to add their names to it. As a result of the campaign and the valuable work of the Anthony Nolan Trust and the DKMS charity, the number of donors signing up to the register had risen significantly, which, importantly, offered encouragement to leukaemia sufferers. He paid tribute to Belfast resident Mrs. Eimear Smyth Gooderham, who had died on 27th June, who had campaigned tirelessly to raise awareness of the stem cell donation register, since being diagnosed in 2016 with a form of blood cancer and concluded by inviting the Council to support Councillor D. Baker's motion.

Ms. A. McIlwaine explained that the Anthony Nolan Trust maintained the United Kingdom's stem cell and bone marrow donation register. She provided a brief overview of the charity's work and, in terms of education, highlighted its targeted campaigns across schools, sports clubs etc. to recruit young donors, particularly between the age of sixteen and thirty, who provided the best long-term outcomes for patients. She pointed out that, each year, two thousand people across the United Kingdom required a life-saving match and welcomed the impact which the Save Our Sunflower campaign and similar initiatives had had in expanding the register. However, she stressed that further work was needed in order to address, for example, under-representation amongst minority groups. She concluded by urging the Council to identify ways in which to support the Save Our Sunflower and related campaigns.

The deputation was thanked by the Lord Mayor and they left the meeting.

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

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Social Housing

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that a request had been received from Ms. E. Morris, of Build Homes Now, to allow a deputation to address the Council in relation to the motion on Social Housing, which had been passed by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 13th November, 2018.

The Council agreed to receive the deputation and Ms. E. Seymour, Mr. Saad Al Shawamreh, Mr. Saeb Shah and Ms. J. Woodside were welcomed to the meeting.

Ms. Seymour reported that Ms. Woodside and Mr. Al Shawamreh represented approximately 15,000 children who were waiting currently to find a home within the City. In the interim, many were forced to live in overcrowded accommodation, much of which was sub-standard and prejudicial to their health. She explained that both Ms. Woodside and Mr. Al Shawamreh were involved in the Build Homes Now campaign, which she claimed offered a simple solution to the housing crisis by building homes on vacant land across the City which were in areas of chronic housing need. Some of that land was publicly owned and had been vacant for a considerable period of time and included the Gasworks, Hillview, Mackies and Sirocco sites. She urged the Council to do everything within its power to ensure that sufficient homes were built on those sites to alleviate the current housing crisis.

Ms. Woodside outlined the impact which homelessness had had upon her and her family and pointed out that she was now helping other young people who found themselves in a similar situation. She reminded the Members that the Planning Committee had, in November 2018, passed a motion calling for action to be taken to ensure that housing provision met current and projected needs in the City. However, that Committee had, recently, approved an outline application for the Sirocco site which, disappointingly, had designated only sixty-seven out of seven hundred houses for social housing. She pointed out that this would not solve the current social housing shortage and that it was imperative that the Council support the Build Homes Now campaign.

Mr. Al Shawamreh explained that his family had moved to Belfast from Syria. However, they, along with a number of other families, had been relocated to temporary accommodation as a result of hate crimes. Much of that accommodation was of a poor quality and had health implications. He urged the Council to support the Syrian community and other homeless people across the City by addressing the social housing crisis.

The Lord Mayor thanked the deputation and they left the meeting.

The Council noted the information which had been provided.

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Alderman Kingston,
Seconded by Councillor Nicholl,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st June be approved and adopted.

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Amendment

Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances

Moved by Councillor Garrett,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st June, under the heading “Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances”, in so far as it relates to the basic allowance, be rejected and, accordingly, the Council agrees not to increase the basic allowance.

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

Submission of Report

At the request of Councillor Garrett, the Council agreed that a report be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee examining the potential for utilising any savings to be derived from not implementing future increases in the basic responsibility allowance for other purposes.

The Council agreed also, at the request of Councillor Matt Collins, that the report should examine the feasibility of linking Members’ allowances directly to staff pay.

Amendment

**Invitation to join the International
Shared Societies Project**

Moved by Councillor Garrett
Seconded by Councillor Black,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st June, under the heading “Invitation to join the International Shared Societies Project”, be rejected and, accordingly, the Council agrees not to participate in the project.

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

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

At the request of Alderman Kingston, the Council agreed, given the timescales involved, that officers submit responses to the draft findings of the South West Scotland Transport Study and to the review of Scotland’s National Transport Strategy, as alluded to within the correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity.

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Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing additions, the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 21st June were thereupon approved and adopted.

People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor Michael Collins,
Seconded by Councillor D. Baker,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 4th June be approved and adopted.

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

At the request of Councillor McLaughlin, the Council granted approval to the Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services to discuss with the Department for Infrastructure the potential for adding a site outside Milltown Cemetery and a site at the Monagh By-Pass to this year's grass cutting schedule.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing addition, the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 4th June were thereupon approved and adopted.

**Resolution: Belfast City Council Traffic
Regulation Order (Northern Ireland) 2019**

Moved by Councillor Michael Collins,
Seconded by Councillor de Faoite and

Resolved - That the Council agrees to pass a Resolution to make a Belfast City Council Traffic Regulation Order (Northern Ireland) 2019, covering those streets set out within pages C1321 to C1323 of the minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 4th June, and to come into effect on 1st July, 2019.

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor Hargey,
Seconded by Councillor Garrett,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 5th June be approved and adopted.

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Amendment

Update on International Relations

Moved by Councillor Kyle,
Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson,

That the decision of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 5th June, under the heading "Update on International Relations", be amended to provide that the Council agrees to participate in the trade mission to Israel in the week commencing 29th July, 2019 and authorises the attendance of the Director of Economic Development (or his nominee) at a cost not exceeding £1,500.

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

<u>For 16</u>	<u>Against 27</u>	<u>No Vote 7</u>
The High Sheriff (Alderman Sandford); Aldermen Haire, Kingston and McCoubrey; and Councillors Brooks, Bunting, Cobain, Dorrian, Graham, Hussey, Hutchinson, T. Kelly, Kyle, Newton, Pankhurst and Verner.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Canavan, Carson, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Corr, de Faoite, Ferguson, Flynn, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCusker, McKeown, McLaughlin, O'Hara, Walsh and Whyte.	Councillors Harvey, M. Kelly, McAllister, McDonough-Brown, McMullan, Mulholland and Nicholl.

City Centre Recovery and Revitalisation Programme

The Council agreed, in response to issues which had been raised by Councillor Ferguson around the contract for the City Currency initiative, that a report be submitted to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

Castle Place and Pedestrianisation

At the request of Councillor Lyons, the Council agreed that the proposed research around models of pedestrianisation or other initiatives, as alluded to within paragraph 3.22 of the report, should consider fully pedestrianised streets, where access was not shared between vehicles and pedestrians on a 24-hour basis but where vehicular access to businesses for deliveries etc. was allowed for short designated periods.

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Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing additions, the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 5th June were thereupon approved and adopted.

Licensing Committee

Moved by Councillor S. Baker,
Seconded by Councillor McAteer and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 19th June, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Carson,
Seconded by Councillor Murphy and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 11th and 13th June, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Brexit Committee

Moved by Councillor de Faoite,
Seconded by Councillor Walsh,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Brexit Committee of 20th June be approved and adopted.

Amendment

**Support for Backstop as part
of any Withdrawal Agreement**

Moved by Councillor Brooks,
Seconded by Councillor Newton,

That the decision of the Brexit Committee of 20th June, under the heading "Support for Backstop as part of any Withdrawal Agreement", be amended to provide that the letter to be sent to the incoming Prime Minister and to the Taoiseach should indicate that the Council's overall position in relation to Brexit, as outlined in the letter, represented a majority rather than a unanimous view.

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

Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the proceedings of the Brexit Committee of 20th June were thereupon approved and adopted.

Notices of Motion

Homeless Status

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

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

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Walsh.

At the request of Councillor Ferguson, the proposer agreed to amend her motion to the effect that the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive be invited to meet with an all-Party delegation from the Council to discuss the motion.

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

TV Licences for Over 75s

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

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

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor S. Baker.

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At the request of Councillor Heading, the proposer agreed to amend her motion to provide for the deletion of the words “requests the BBC to immediately cease these plans” at the start of the second paragraph and the insertion of the following:

“The Council agrees:

1. to write to the BBC to highlight our opposition to its decision, at a time when pay for BBC senior managers is at unjustifiable levels;
2. to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to raise our objections and call for the provision of adequate funding to sustain this benefit;
3. to write to the National Pensioners’ Convention to indicate our support for its ongoing campaign.”

Accordingly, the motion, as proposed by Councillor Groves and seconded by Councillor S. Baker, as amended and set out below, was thereupon put to the Council and passed:

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

The Council agrees:

1. to write to the BBC to highlight our opposition to its decision, at a time when pay for BBC senior managers is at unjustifiable levels;
2. to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to raise our objections and call for the provision of adequate funding to sustain this benefit;
3. to write to the National Pensioners’ Convention to indicate our support for its ongoing campaign; and
4. that the Mayor of Belfast convene a meeting with BBC senior officials and the Council’s Reference Group on Older People to hear at first hand the impact that this decision will have on our most valued and respected citizens of Belfast.”

Welfare Mitigation Schemes

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

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

The Council notes with deep concern the range of reports published recently which highlight the serious risk of greater hardship for many within our

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community, if welfare mitigations do not continue beyond March 2020. These reports include:

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

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Black.

Amendment

Moved by Alderman Kingston,
Seconded by Councillor Pankhurst,

That the motion under the heading “Welfare Mitigation Schemes”, as proposed by Councillor Canavan and seconded by Councillor Black, be amended to provide for the addition of the following at the end of the motion:

“and calls for the immediate restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive so that it can take decisions and actions on this important issue.”

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

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Matt Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Michael Collins,

That the motion under the heading “Welfare Mitigation Schemes”, as proposed by Councillor Canavan and seconded by Councillor Black, as amended, be amended to provide for the removal of everything after the words “This Council” in the first paragraph and the insertion of the following:

“condemns the decision to allow Welfare Reform into Belfast by the Executive in 2015, via a legislative consent motion.

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

The Council recognises also that said mitigation packages do not go far enough. Thousands are already suffering, are at food banks, are

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homeless, all because of Welfare Reforms, all while the mitigations have been in place.

The Council calls on all Parties to support: the call to end Welfare Reform and to replace it with a welfare system that is more equal and humane; the need to continue welfare mitigations as an alleviating measure until such time as a fairer system is implemented, as outlined in the range of reports published recently, which highlight the risk of greater hardship if mitigations do not continue post 2020. The reports include:

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

The Council agrees to write to the Department for Communities calling for it to take all steps necessary to ensure that mitigation schemes will continue to help the most vulnerable in our society.”

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

<u>For 10</u>	<u>Against 38</u>
Councillors Matt Collins, Michael Collins, de Faoite, Ferguson, Flynn, Heading, Lyons, McKeown, O’Hara and Whyte.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Finucane); The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds); The High Sheriff (Councillor Sandford); Aldermen Haire, Kingston and McCoubrey; and Councillors D. Baker, S. Baker, Beattie, Black, Brooks, Bunting, Canavan, Carson, Cobain, Corr, Dorrian, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Hussey, Hutchinson, M. Kelly, T. Kelly, Kyle, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McLaughlin, McMullan, Mulholland, Newton, Nicholl, Pankhurst, Verner and Walsh.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Magee,
Seconded by Councillor Hargey,

That the motion under the heading “Welfare Mitigation Schemes”, as proposed by Councillor Canavan and seconded by Councillor Black, as amended, be amended further to provide for the addition of the following at the start of the motion:

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“The policy of austerity and welfare cuts imposed by the British Government is wrong and should be reversed.”

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

The original motion, as amended, was thereupon put to the Council as the substantive motion and passed as follows:

“The policy of austerity and welfare cuts imposed by the British Government is wrong and should be reversed.

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

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

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

The Council calls on all parties to support the need to continue welfare mitigations beyond March 2020, agrees to write to the Department for Communities calling for it to take all steps necessary to ensure that mitigations schemes will continue to help the most vulnerable in our community and calls for the immediate restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive so that it can take decisions and actions on this important issue.”

Save our Sunflower Campaign

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor D. Baker proposed:

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

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Carson.

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

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Voting Rights for Irish Citizens in Presidential Elections

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

“This Council:

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Heading.

At the request of Councillor Flynn, the proposer agreed to amend his motion to provide for the addition of the words “and Irish Diaspora” after the word “Ireland” in the final bullet point.

Accordingly, the motion, as proposed by Councillor de Faoite and seconded by Councillor Heading, as amended and set out below, was thereupon put to the Council and passed:

“This Council:

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

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Domestic Violence

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor M. Kelly proposed:

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

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

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Nicholl.

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

Water Refill Points

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

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

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

The motion was seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McReynolds).

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

Webcasting of Committee Meetings

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

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

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The motion was seconded by Councillor Harvey.

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

Centenary of the Foundation of Northern Ireland

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

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

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Hutchinson.

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

Abortion Imagery

In the absence of Councillor Groogan, the Council agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 13(i), that the motion standing in her name be withdrawn from the agenda.

Glyphosate-Based Weedkiller

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

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

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Matt Collins.

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

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Air Quality in Belfast

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

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

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

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

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Kyle.

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

Lord Mayor
Chairperson