

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Environmental Services Committee held in the Island Civic Centre, Lisburn, on Wednesday, 3 February 2016, at 5:30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Brian Hanvey (Chair)

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor R T Beckett

Aldermen T Jeffers and S P Porter

Councillors N Anderson, J Baird, B Bloomfield, P Catney, A Givan, J Gray MBE, A McIntyre, T Mitchell, T Morrow, Jenny Palmer, L Poots and R Walker

OTHER MEMBERS: Alderman J Tinsley

IN ATTENDANCE: Director of Environmental Services
Head of Service (Technical and Estates)
Head of Service (Environmental Health)
Parks Manager East

1. Apologies

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of the Deputy Mayor, Councillor A Redpath.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chair invited Members to declare any interests they might have in relation to the business of the meeting and reminded them of the requirement to complete Declaration of Interest forms in this regard, which had been provided at the meeting. The following declarations of interest were made:

- Councillor T Morrow in respect of Item 2 in the report from the Head of Service (Environmental Health) – Review of the Role and Regulation of the Private Rented Sector – on the basis that he is a landlord renting out property
- Councillor Jenny Palmer in respect of Item 2 in the report from the Head of Service (Environmental Health) – Review of the Role and Regulation of the Private Rented Sector – on the basis that she is a landlord renting out property

3. Minutes

It was proposed by Alderman T Jeffers, seconded by Councillor A McIntyre and agreed that the minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held on 6 January 2016, as adopted at the meeting of Council held on 26 January 2016, be confirmed and signed.

4. Report from the Director of Environmental Services

Items for Noting

4.1 Environmental Services Trading Accounts Period 9 Position

Members were provided with a copy of Period 9 trading accounts for information. The Director of Environmental Services further reminded Members that monthly budget control meetings were taking place with Corporate Services, attended by the Director and Heads of Services, at which detailed analysis of committed budgets and variances was carried out.

4.2 Corporate Risk Register

Members were provided with a copy of the Corporate Risk Register. Following a number of workshops, the Corporate and service unit risk registers had been developed and had been approved by the Governance and Audit Committee at its January meeting. The Director of Environmental Services drew Members' attention to the associated risk action plans, which outlined arrangements in Environmental Services to manage those particular Corporate risks. She added that the risk registers would be subject to regular review and amendment.

4.3 Correspondence from the Department for Social Development (DSD) regarding Departmental Reviews of Private Sector Housing Grants and Statutory Housing Fitness Standard

Members were provided with a copy of correspondence from the DSD regarding Departmental reviews of private sector housing grants and statutory housing fitness standard as well as a copy of the draft Terms of Reference. The Council would be represented on the Group by a member of the Environmental Health Service Unit, with a nomination yet to be made.

4.4 Correspondence from the NI Assembly Committee for Regional Development – Schemes to Alleviate Flooding and Stormwater

Members were provided with a copy of correspondence from the Committee for Regional Development regarding schemes to alleviate flooding and stormwater.

The Director of Environmental Services tabled a draft response for acceptance and advised that this was subject to ratification by Council at the February meeting.

4.5 Staff Levels and Structure – Per- and Post-Vesting Day

Members were advised that a Corporate report in respect of structure and staffing levels across the organisation would be presented at the Corporate Services Committee meeting and the relevant extract in respect of Environmental Services would then be tabled at the Environmental Services Committee meeting for information. Members' queries regarding pre- and post-Vesting Day arrangements would be addressed in the report.

4.6 Guidance to Councils on the Procedures and Payment of Emergency Planning Grant

Members were provided with a copy of Guidance to Councils on the Procedures and Payments of the Emergency Planning Grant in 2015/2016 for information.

4.7 Homeowner Flood Protection Grant Scheme

Members were provided with a copy of correspondence and an information leaflet from the Rivers Agency providing advice to homeowners regarding the Flood Protection Grant Scheme for information.

It was proposed by Councillor N Anderson, seconded by Councillor A McIntyre and agreed to note Items 4.1 to 4.7 in the report from the Director of Environmental Services.

Councillor J Baird joined the meeting at 5.40 pm.

4.8 Report from Head of Service (Technical and Estates)

Items for Decision

4.8.1 Commercial Waste Collection

Members were reminded that the Council currently offered a mixed dry recyclables and organic collection service alongside a residual waste collection service to some commercial customers and primarily schools, at a significantly lower cost than the equivalent bin size for residual waste in order to encourage these customers to recycle and thus improve recycling rates and increase diversion from landfill. As this service had been introduced to existing customers, approval was sought that the collection of recycling bins should only be offered to customers who avail of the residual bin collection service. Payment for this service was in advance annually and new customers requesting an in-year service received an invoice allowing for a payment delay of 30 days. Approval was sought that only eligible commercial customers currently receiving a residual waste collection service from the Council could be provided with mixed dry recyclables and/or organic collections and that new in-year commercial waste customers would be required to pay for two months' collections in advance of service provision in order to minimise the risk of payment default.

It was proposed by Councillor T Morrow, seconded by Councillor B Bloomfield and agreed that only eligible commercial customers could be provided with mixed dry recyclables and/or organic collections and that new in-year commercial waste customers be asked to pay for two months' collections in advance of service being provided.

4.8.2 Household Bulky Waste Collections

Members were reminded that the amended policy for household bulky waste collections was due to be implemented with effect from 1 April 2016. It was anticipated that the free-of-charge service might pose significant operational

difficulties, therefore, in order to ensure consistent implementation in accordance with the policy, guidance had been produced and was tabled for Members' consideration.

Alderman Jeffers enquired whether senior citizens would receive assistance with bulky items. The Head of Service advised that residents who were registered for assisted lifts would be considered for assistance in this service.

It was proposed by Alderman T Jeffers, seconded by Councillor A Givan and agreed to approve the guidance in relation to household bulky waste collections to be implemented with effect from 1 April 2016.

4.8.3 Electricity Procurement

Members were advised that the current electricity contract was due to expire on 31 March 2016 and Members were asked to approve re-tendering of a framework agreement for the provision of electricity supplies to the Council for a two-year contract.

Due to rapid price fluctuations in the energy markets, it would not be possible for suppliers to hold prices for any great length of time, therefore delegated authority to the Chair of the Environmental Services Committee and the Director of Environmental Services was sought to approve the award of the electricity tender.

It was proposed by Councillor J Baird, seconded by Councillor N Anderson and agreed to approve re-tendering for the provision of electricity supplies to the Council using the framework agreement for electricity suppliers for a two-year contract and that delegated authority be granted to the Chair of the Environmental Services Committee and the Director of Environmental Services to approve the award of the electricity tender.

Items for Noting

4.8.4 Natural Gas Procurement

Members were advised of the award of tender for the supply of natural gas to Go Power for sites with a consumption of more than 732,000 kWh annually (Lot 1) and to Firmus Energy Ltd for sites with a consumption of less than 732,000 kWh annually (Lot 2).

It was proposed by Councillor A Givan, seconded by Councillor T Morrow and agreed to note Item 4.8.4 in the report from the Head of Service (Technical and Estates).

4.9 Report from Head of Service (Environmental Health)

Items for Decision

4.9.1 Environmental Health Service Unit Bye-Laws

Members were provided with details of proposed new consolidated bye-laws for Control of Infections and the amended bye-law for Consumption of Intoxicating Liquor in Designated Places.

In response to a query from Councillor Jenny Palmer, the Head of Service advised that enforcement of bye-laws in respect of the consumption of intoxicating liquor in designated places relied on witness statements and detection by the PSNI. Provision had been made in the bye-laws for pavement cafes to serve alcohol in the immediate area outside their premises.

It was proposed by Councillor P Catney, seconded by Councillor N Anderson and agreed to approve the revoking of the former Lisburn City Council and Castlereagh Borough Council bye-laws as well as the progression of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Consumption of Intoxicating Liquor in Designated Places and Control of Infection bye-laws, incorporating acupuncture, cosmetic piercing, semi-permanent make-up, tattooing and electrolysis.

4.9.2 Review of the Role and Regulation of the Private Rented Sector

Members were provided with details of the key objectives in the consultation document Review of the Role and Regulation of the Private Rented Sector to:

- Assess the contribution the private rented sector currently makes and could potentially make in the future to increase housing supply, meet need and demand;
- Identify the key enablers to support the current and potential future role of the private rented sector;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of existing regulation of the private rented sector;
- Ascertain if there are any unintended consequences in the current system and make recommendations on how these could be addressed;
- Assess the contribution the private rented sector does and could make to support the Northern Ireland Executive's Together Building a United Community Strategy, which has a clear focus on encouraging more shared housing.

The following points were also considered:

- The current role of the private rented sector in meeting housing need;
- The future role of the private rented sector and its potential for further growth;
- The opportunities and challenges that face those involved in the sector, including tenants, landlords and landlord representatives;
- Lessons learned from policy developments and regulatory frameworks in place locally, elsewhere in the United Kingdom and internationally.

Members were also provided with comments in relation to the consultation.

It was proposed by Councillor N Anderson, seconded by Councillor L Poots and agreed to approve the comments in relation to the Review of the Role and Regulation of the Private Rented Sector consultation document.

4.9.3 Caravan Sites – Proposed Study Visit for Elected Members to South Dublin County Council

Members were provided with an invitation to nominate an Elected Member to participate in a proposed study visit for Elected Members to South Dublin County Council as part of the ongoing training programme for councils subscribing to the Northern Ireland Local Government Partnership on Traveller Issues.

Members were reminded that the Council was a member of the Northern Ireland Local Government Partnership on Traveller Issues and was, therefore, entitled to participate in officer working groups and to nominate Elected Members to the Board of the Partnership, although Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council had deferred making an appointment to the Board.

In light of the recent correspondence requesting again consideration of nomination to the Board from Councillor P Catney, it was proposed by Councillor James Baird, seconded by Councillor N Anderson and agreed that Councillor P Catney be appointed as the Council's representative on the Board of the Northern Ireland Local Government Partnership on Traveller Issues.

It was further proposed by Alderman T Jeffers, seconded by Councillor J Gray and agreed that Councillor P Catney be nominated as the Council's representative on a study visit to South Dublin County Council, arranged by the Northern Ireland Local Government Partnership on Traveller Issues.

Items for Noting

4.9.4 Caravan Sites – Caravan Site Licensing

Members were provided with a copy from the Northern Ireland Local Government Partnership on Traveller Issues reminding member councils that they had a duty under the Caravans Act (NI) 1963 to license all caravan sites.

Members were advised that there were three caravan sites in the Council area, which were all satisfactory in relation to density and spatial arrangement. Two sites were fully compliant and the third site, which, although not licensed, was subject to a file review by Council officers with a view to advancing the necessary permissions.

4.9.5 Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland

Members were provided with a copy of the Business Plan for 2016/2017 from the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland for information. Following consideration of the consultation document by the Council's Safeguarding Working Group, any comments would be tabled at a future Committee meeting for Members' information.

4.9.6 Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) (Northern Ireland) Order 1991

Members were advised that a routine test purchase exercise for the sale of cigarettes to persons under the legal age of 18 had been carried out on 28 October 2015. Four of the premises tested had failed and been issued formal cautions.

4.9.7 Correspondence from NILGA re: The Role of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)

Members were provided with a copy of correspondence from NILGA regarding the role of the NIHE in providing social housing stock. Members were invited to forward any comments to the Head of Service (Environmental Health) for inclusion in a response to be forwarded by 29 February 2016.

It was proposed by Councillor A McIntyre, seconded by Councillor A Givan and agreed to note Items 4.9.4 to 4.9.7 in the report from the Head of Service (Environmental Health).

4.10 Report from Head of Service (Operational Services)

Items for Noting

4.10.1 Ulster in Bloom 2015

Members were reminded of previous discussion regarding the cost and resource commitments associated with competing in the Britain in Bloom Awards 2016 and in line with Members' wishes, the associated costs would be sourced from existing budgets.

Members raised concerns that the funding allowance for Hillsborough would reduce allowances in other areas. The Director of Environmental Services advised of current scheme proposals to celebrate the 90th birthday of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, and confirmed that these schemes and proposals for Britain in Bloom would be co-joined where possible in the interests of efficiency. Members asked to be furnished with an overview of profile of budget for the entire Council area and that this be circulated to Members as soon as it was available..

Councillor L Poots sought confirmation in respect of community floral schemes and asked that officers bring back suggestions on progressing maintenance arrangements of these schemes where community groups were not available.

4.10.2 Lisburn Rotary Club: Planting Request Within Castle Gardens

Members were advised of correspondence from Lisburn Rotary Club in respect of planting crocus bulbs in Castle Gardens adjacent to an existing dedicated bench donated by the Rotary Club, to raise awareness of polio.

It was proposed by Alderman S P Porter, seconded by Councillor A Givan and agreed to note Items 4.10.1 and 4.10.2 in the report from the Head of Service (Operational Services).

5. Confidential Report from the Director of Environmental Services

It was proposed by Councillor N Anderson, seconded by Councillor J Baird and agreed to consider the confidential report from the Director of Environmental Services 'In Committee', in accordance with the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, Schedule 6, Part 1:

Item 5.1 'Residual Waste Treatment Project – Update following Meeting of Chief Executives with arc21 on 18 January 2016', Clause 3.

Items for Noting

5.1 Residual Waste Treatment Project (RWTP) – Update following Meeting of Chief Executives with arc21 on 18 January 2016

Members were provided with a copy of a letter from the Chief Executive to arc21 outlining the Council's commitment to the RWTP and proceeding with the referral to the Planning Appeals Commission.

It was proposed by Councillor T Morrow, seconded by Councillor J Gray and agreed to note the information received in respect of the arc21 RWTP.

It was proposed by Councillor A McIntyre, seconded by Councillor N Anderson that normal business be resumed.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Arc 21 Conference entitled Recovering Value from our Waste, MAC Metropolitan Arts Centre, Belfast, 29 February 2016

Members were advised that arc21 had arranged a half-day capacity building conference for all Elected Members in the six constituent councils, to take place on the morning of 29 February 2016 at the MAC Metropolitan Arts Centre, Belfast. In response to a query from Councillor Baird, the Director of Environmental Services confirmed that this was open to all Members and the invitation could be circulated by Member Services following the meeting.

Furthermore, the Director of Environmental Services sought delegated authority for the Environmental Services Committee at its March meeting to consider the arc21 contracts, which had been delayed.

It was proposed by Councillor N Anderson, seconded by Councillor A Givan and agreed to note the notification of a half-day conference entitled Recovering Value from our Waste, MAC Metropolitan Arts Centre, Belfast, on 29 February 2016 and to grant approval to delegate authority to the Environmental Services Committee for consideration of the arc21 contracts.

6.2 Japanese Knotweed in the Newtownbreda Area

Councillor N Anderson advised that Japanese Knotweed had been detected in the Newtownbreda area and he asked that officers contact TransportNI for assistance to destroy the weed.

6.3 Antisocial Behaviour at Blaris Road Cemetery

Councillor A McIntyre advised that there had been instances of antisocial behaviour at Blaris Road Cemetery and he asked that the premises be locked at night. The Director advised that this would be investigated with a view to preventing any further fly-tipping and antisocial behaviour.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 6.56 pm.

Chair:

Date: