

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Remote Monthly Meeting of Council held on Tuesday 23 November, 2021 at 7:00 pm

PRESENT IN CHAMBER:

The Right Worshipful the Mayor
Alderman S Martin

Deputy Mayor
Councillor T Mitchell

Aldermen J Baird, W J Dillon MBE, A P Ewart MBE,
A Grehan and J Tinsley

Councillors R Carlin, D J Craig, A P Ewing, A Givan,
A Gowan, M Gregg, D Honeyford, J Lavery BEM, S Lee,
U Mackin, C McCready, R McLernon and A Swan

PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:

Aldermen D Drysdale, O Gawith and S P Porter

Councillors N Anderson, R T Beckett, S Carson, S Eastwood,
J Gallen, M Guy, S Lowry, J McCarthy, G McCleave,
A McIntyre, Jenny Palmer, John Palmer, S Skillen and
N Trimble

IN ATTENDANCE IN CHAMBER:

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Chief Executive
Member Services Officers
Technician
IT Officer

IN ATTENDANCE IN REMOTE LOCATION:

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Director of Environmental Services
Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing
Director of Service Transformation

Reverend Cheryl Meban

Commencement of the Meeting

At the commencement of the meeting, The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin, welcomed those present to this meeting of Council, which was being live-streamed to enable members of the public to hear and see the proceedings. He requested that all mobile phones be put on silent or switched off for the duration of the meeting and pointed out that, in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, whilst the meeting was being live-streamed, unauthorised recording was not permitted. The Chief Executive, outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

At this point, the Member Services Officer read out the names of the Elected Members and Officers in attendance at the meeting.

Prayers

At this point, The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin, expressed condolences in relation to the following bereavements:

- Niamh Drayne, daughter of Michael and Stella Drayne;
- Ruth Gamble;
- Gary Hughes, father of Councillor S Hughes; and
- Arenee Henderson, wife of Alderman M Henderson MBE.

As a mark of respect for the above, Members present stood and observed a minute's silence.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin, welcomed his Chaplain, Reverend Cheryl Meban, Presbyterian Chaplain at Ulster University, to the meeting. Reverend Meban gave an address during which she too remembered the bereaved families referred to by the Mayor. Alderman Martin thanked Reverend Meban for her attendance at tonight's meeting, as well as her attendance at a number of events during the course of the last month.

1. Business of The Right Worshipful the Mayor

1.1 Mayor's Engagements

The Council noted a number of engagements attended by The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin, and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor T Mitchell, since the last meeting of Council. In particular, the Mayor highlighted:

- recent engagement with children and young people across Lisburn and Castlereagh. He had been particularly impressed with the work of groups around mental wellbeing and the depth of information and knowledge they had of elected representatives;
- Jacob Dumigan, a 10 year old year 7 pupil from Pond Park Primary School who was involved in the Eco Council. Jacob had taken up photography during lockdown and had won a competition. Together with another resident from Royal Hillsborough, Alan Woods, they had had their photographs showcased in the Ulster Wildlife Calendar for 2022. At the age of 10, not only was Jacob a budding photographer, but he recently was involved in a triathlon to raise money for Parkinson's Disease and was a carer within his family home;
- a 'Santa Dash' had been arranged to take place at Lough Moss Leisure Centre on 8 December and the Mayor encouraged as many Members as possible to get involved in this; and
- the 140th Anniversary Dinner for Lisburn Distillery Football Club. It was incredible for any organisation to reach such a milestone and he congratulated the Club in this regard.

1.1 Mayor's Engagements (Contd)

Alderman W J Dillon complimented The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin, in respect of the amount of work he had carried out during his term of office. He referred specifically to events related to the award of Royal Status to Hillsborough Village and thanked all those involved in organising those.

2. Apologies

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of Alderman M Henderson MBE, Councillor S Hughes and Councillor H Legge.

3. Declarations of Interest

No verbal declarations of interest were made during the meeting; however, the following written declaration was submitted:

- Councillor U Mackin, in respect of item 8, Adoption of Minutes (Corporate Services Committee, page 840, item 8.2 – Land Disposal Proposals), given that he was a Member of the Board of Lagan Valley Regional Park.

4. Council Minutes

It was proposed by Alderman W J Dillon, seconded by Alderman J Tinsley and agreed that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 26 October, 2021 be confirmed and signed.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Deputations

There were no deputations.

7. Business Required by Statute

(i) Signing of Legal Documents

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor S Lee and agreed that the following legal documents be signed at the meeting:

- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and The Mount Charles Group Limited, Annon House, 2611-263 Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 3GG – Contract T21/22-006 for the Provision of Cleaning Services; and

(i) Signing of Legal Documents (Contd)

- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Irish Waste Services Ltd, 94-96 Hillsborough Road, Carryduff BT8 8HT – Contract for Lot 1 – Provision of a haulage service for leachate from Moss Road Landfill site and cesspool effluent from tank at Carryduff Household Recycling Centre; Lot 2 – Reception and Treatment of leachate from Moss Road Landfill Site and cesspool effluent from tank at Carryduff Household Recycling Centre.

8. Adoption of Minutes of Committees

Leisure and Community Development Committee **2 November, 2021**

Proposed by Councillor R T Beckett
Seconded by Alderman J Tinsley

Environmental Services Committee **3 November, 2021**

Proposed by Councillor A P Ewing
Seconded by Councillor C McCready

Development Committee **4 November, 2021**

Proposed by Alderman A Grehan
Seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor T Mitchell

Capital Projects Committee **9 November, 2021**

Proposed by Councillor S Lowry
Seconded by Councillor M Gregg

Corporate Services Committee **10 November, 2021**

Proposed by Councillor J Laverty
Seconded by Alderman A G Ewart

Councillor N Trimble stated that he wished to refer to item 8.2 of the above minutes, which was a confidential item. That being the case, it was agreed to go into committee.

“In Committee”

It was proposed by Councillor J Laverty, seconded by Councillor A Swan and agreed that the following item be considered “in committee”, in the absence of members of the press and public being present. The live stream of the meeting was paused at this stage.

Page 840, Item 8.2
Land Disposal Proposals

Councillor N Trimble referred to the minute relating to the disposal of lands at Barbour Gardens, Lisburn; Moore’s Bridge, Lisburn; and Dundonald International Ice Bowl. He specifically referred to Barbour Gardens and Moore’s Bridge and requested that community consultation be carried out prior to making a decision on the disposal of any asset. With regard to the land at Moore’s Bridge, Councillor Jenny Palmer also requested that consultation take place with the

Page 840, Item 8.2
Land Disposal Proposals (Contd)

Lagan Valley Regional Park. Further to comments by the Chief Executive, the Chairman of the Corporate Services Committee, Councillor J Laverty, acceded to these requests.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor T Mitchell, seconded by Alderman A Grehan and agreed to come out of committee and normal business was resumed. The live stream of the meeting was recommenced at this stage.

Planning Committee

4 October, 2021

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting of 4 October, 2021 had been circulated for noting only as these minutes had been agreed at the subsequent meeting of the Planning Committee on 1 November, 2021. It was proposed by Councillor A Swan, seconded by Alderman J Tinsley and agreed that their contents be noted.

9. Report from Chief Executive

There were no reports from the Chief Executive.

10. Reports from Members on Boards

There were no reports from Members on Boards.

11. Reports on Decisions Subject to the Reconsideration Procedure

There were no reports on decisions subject to the reconsideration procedure.

12. Notice of Motion

12.1 Transparency and Accountability in Local Government
Councillor R Carlin

A copy of the following Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor R Carlin had been circulated to Members with the notice convening the meeting:

“That this Council recognises the importance of transparency and accountability in local government and agrees that strengthening public access to decision-making is key to improving public trust and confidence at Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

12.1 Transparency and Accountability in Local Government (Contd)
Councillor R Carlin

The Council agrees that it is in both ratepayers and public interest to grant access to Video and Audio recordings of Full Council and Committee meetings following the Live Stream. It therefore agrees to publish these recordings online, leaving them freely accessible to the public going forward”.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor R Carlin and seconded by Councillor G McCleave.

Due to the cross-cutting nature of this Notice of Motion, The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin, stated that it should be considered at this meeting, unless there were any objections. Alderman J Tinsley referred to correspondence from the Chief Executive to Party Group Leaders two weeks previously seeking feedback in relation to minutes and recordings. Given that that piece of work was underway, Alderman Tinsley suggested that this Notice of Motion be referred to the Corporate Services Committee for consideration alongside that work. Councillor R Carlin stated that, whilst he appreciated Alderman Tinsley’s comments, he considered it best for his Notice of Motion to be discussed at this meeting; given that it related to transparency, it was his view that, as the audio recording of this meeting would be available following the meeting, but no such recordings of Corporate Services Committee meetings were available, it should be debated now.

Councillor Carlin stated that his Notice of Motion sought to achieve a very clear and simple result – to provide maximum access to the decision-making process in Council by publishing video and audio recordings online. He took his role as an elected representative very seriously. Decisions taken by Council had a direct impact on constituents’ lives, their families and their communities and should be as transparent as possible. Whilst the PA system installed the previous year in the Council Chamber had been put to good use in providing a live stream of Council and Committee meetings, those were not accessible afterwards. Councillor Carlin referred to the accessibility of recordings by other councils and stated that Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council must seek to provide a similar level of transparency.

In seconding this Notice of Motion, Councillor G McCleave stated that the Council needed to have full transparency and accountability. Ratepayers had the right to know what elected representatives were voting for in Council and that they were doing their best to represent their needs.

A number of Members spoke in support of the Notice of Motion, namely Alderman O Gawith, Councillor N Anderson, Councillor J McCarthy and Councillor N Trimble. In supporting the Notice of Motion, comments were made around such issues as:

- the current review around reducing the amount of items considered under confidential business and the subsequent release of some of those items for public consumption;

12.1 Transparency and Accountability in Local Government (Contd)
Councillor R Carlin

- the success of having appointed an Independent Member to sit on the Governance and Audit Committee, which helped give constituents confidence that elected representatives were doing the best they could;
- the importance of utilising the digital technology available to best communicate with constituents; and
- the importance of Members being able to stand over any comments they made in the Council Chamber if challenged on those.

Alderman J Tinsley proposed an amendment to the Notice of Motion, in that the final sentence be changed to read “It therefore agrees to bring back a full report that has already started by the Chief Executive on the pros and cons of this proposal including cost, data protection, how long recordings would remain online, list of committees etc in order to publish these recordings online, leaving them freely accessible to the public going forward”. Councillor R Carlin agreed to accept this amendment to his Notice of Motion.

Councillor A Givan then spoke in support of the amendment to the Notice of Motion. He pointed out that the Notice of Motion referred to the importance of transparency and accountability; however, he stated his belief that there was already transparency and openness in the Council’s current Committee system and did not wish a message to go out from the Chamber that that was not the case.

Alderman W J Dillon stated that he welcomed openness and transparency and believed that that currently existed within the Council. He stated that he could not support the Notice of Motion until the report addressing issues such as financial implications was available.

In respect of comments made around the Party Group Leaders Forum, Councillors G McCleave and R Carlin voiced their concern that, as a party of two, Sinn Féin was not represented on that Forum.

At this point the Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor R Carlin and seconded by Councillor G McCleave, as amended by Alderman J Tinsley, was put to the meeting and, on a vote being taken, was declared “carried”, the voting being 36 votes in favour and 1 abstention.

Alderman O Gawith left the meeting at this point.

13. Confidential Business – Verbal Matters

“In Committee”

It was proposed by Councillor C McCready, seconded by Councillor D J Craig and agreed that the following items be considered “in committee”, in the absence of members of the press and public being present. The live stream of the meeting was paused at this stage.

13.1 Consideration of PAC Planning Appeals Decision

Councillor N Anderson referred to the above matter, which had been considered by the Development Committee at its meeting held on 4 November, 2021 (page 826, item 5.1). It had been agreed at that meeting that issues raised would be addressed further with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads Officials at the special Council meeting on 29 November. However, Councillor Anderson requested that, in addition to that, a letter be sent to the Minister for Infrastructure and the Chair of Infrastructure Committee in this regard. The Chairman of the Development Committee, Alderman A Grehan, acceded to this request.

13.2 Confidential Business

The Chief Executive updated Members with regard to confidential items of business and took note of several comments made. Councillor N Anderson put on record his thanks to the Chief Executive for actions he had taken in this regard.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor A Swan, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor T Mitchell, and agreed to come out of committee and normal business was resumed. The live stream of the meeting was recommenced at this stage.

14. Any Other Business

14.1 Retirement of NILGA Chief Executive
The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin, reported receipt of correspondence from NILGA advising of the retirement of its Chief Executive, Mr D McCallum, whom the Mayor wished well for the future.

14.2 Additional Day's Leave on Christmas Eve
The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin, proposed that, in order to acknowledge the outstanding hard work of Council staff during what had been another challenging year with the ongoing pandemic, they be granted an additional day's leave on Christmas Eve. This proposal was seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor T Mitchell, and agreed.

14.3 Lucy's Law
Alderman A G Ewart

Councillor N Trimble left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (8.45 pm).

Alderman A G Ewart referred to a decision taken in April 2021 to write to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) to affirm Council support for Lucy's Law being legislated for in Northern Ireland. Having

14.3 Lucy's Law
Alderman A G Ewart

sought an update from the Chief Executive on this matter, the Chief Executive stated that a response to the letter had recently been received from the Department's Animal Welfare Team. That response advised that Mr R Newton MLA had lodged a Private Members' Bill with the Northern Ireland Executive for consideration in due course by Ministers. Civil Servants were working behind the scenes to consider policy development that may be required alongside that. The response also pointed out that councils could voluntarily hold a list of puppy breeders within their areas. The Chief Executive advised that there were only two puppy breeders in the Lisburn & Castlereagh area and both were registered with the Council. Details of those had not been published at this moment in time in light of feedback from the two puppy breeders, who were content with the methods they had in place for managing that.

It was proposed by Alderman A G Ewart, seconded by Councillor S Eastwood and agreed to write to Party Group Leaders within the Northern Ireland Executive requesting their party support as Lucy's Law went through the Northern Ireland Assembly.

14.4 Secondary Breast Cancer
Councillor S Eastwood

Councillor S Eastwood referred to emails she had received from constituents in relation to secondary breast cancer. There were currently no official figures for people with secondary breast cancer in Northern Ireland and this needed to change. Beaconbridge Secondary Breast Cancer Group had been in the media the previous week regarding its Need to be Counted Campaign to help shape health services, which Councillor Eastwood supported. More information for people could change a prognosis from a death sentence to a chronic disease. The Group was calling on the Health Minister to make a commitment to establishing an audit of people in Northern Ireland with secondary breast cancer. One of the Group's main concerns was that a lot of people did not have time to wait to be counted; time was of the essence. It was proposed by Councillor S Eastwood that a letter be sent to the Health Minister in support of the request by Beaconbridge Secondary Breast Cancer Group that he commit to establishing this audit. The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin, stated that, as this was a health matter, it should be referred to the December meeting of the Corporate Services Committee for consideration. The Chairman of that Committee, Councillor J Laverty, agreed that this matter be referred for consideration.

Councillor R Carlin left the meeting at this point (8.47 pm).

14.5 Christmas Tree Lights at Harmony Hill and Moss Road Shopping Areas
Councillor D J Craig

Councillor D J Craig thanked the Director of Service Transformation for arranging to have Christmas tree lights put up at Harmony Hill and Moss Road shopping areas. This had brought about a lot of positive feedback from constituents.

14.6 Covid-19 Enforcement
Councillor J Laverty

Councillor R Carlin returned to the meeting during consideration of this item of business (8.50 pm).

Councillor J Laverty referred to recent media coverage around Covid-19 enforcement. He asked the Chief Executive to outline the Council's responsibilities in this regard, whether there had been any further instructions or advice given to Council around enforcement, if the Council had trained staff to carry out additional responsibilities and would staff be expected to work throughout the holiday period. The Chief Executive stated that the Council continued to engage and work with Stormont on decisions but was not privy to those decisions before they were made. He anticipated a lot of dialogue over the next few days and stated that the Director of Environmental Services and her Officers would liaise with Councillor Laverty.

14.7 Light Festival – Carryduff
Councillor S Lee

Councillor S Lee referred to Carryduff having been included in the Light Festival this year. He stated that feedback from the community had been excellent and he congratulated the Officers involved in this.

14.8 Christmas at the Castle
Councillor S Carson

Councillor S Carson referred to the forthcoming Christmas at the Castle events in Castle Gardens and commended Officers involved.

14.9 Refurbishment of Hilden War Memorial
Councillor S Carson

Councillor S Carson put on record his thanks to the Director of Service Transformation, Head of Assets, Construction Services Manager and Technical Officer (Construction Services) for their involvement with recently-completed work at Hilden War Memorial. He also put on record his appreciation to Gavin Bamford and Nigel Henderson from History Hub Ulster as it was through their intervention in raising the condition of the war memorial with Councillor Carson that refurbishment had taken place. An application for funding had been made to assist with the refurbishment work but it had also been covered through the DEA Scheme.

14.10 Covid-19 Enforcement
Councillor J Laverty

Further to discussion under item 14.6 above, Councillor J Laverty requested, should there be additional costs to the Council in having staff carry out enforcement work, that it be ascertained if those costs would be met by Stormont rather than the Council.

Conclusion of the Meeting

At the conclusion of the meeting, The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin, thanked those present for their attendance.

There being no further business for consideration, the meeting was terminated at 8.56 pm.

Mayor