

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Remote Monthly Meeting of Council held on Tuesday, 26 May, 2020 at 2:13 pm

PRESENT IN CHAMBER:

The Right Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor A Givan

Aldermen J Baird, W J Dillon MBE, M Henderson MBE,
A Grehan, S P Porter and J Tinsley

Councillors N Anderson, D J Craig, M Gregg, D Honeyford,
U Mackin and A Swan

PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:

Deputy Mayor
Councillor J McCarthy

Aldermen A G Ewart MBE and S Martin

Councillors R T Beckett, R Carlin, S Carson, S Eastwood,
A P Ewing, J Gallen, O Gawith, A Gowan, M Guy, S Hughes,
J Lavery BEM, S Lee, H Legge, S Lowry, G McCleave,
C McCready, A McIntyre, R McLernon, T Mitchell,
Jenny Palmer, John Palmer, S Skillen and N Trimble

IN ATTENDANCE:

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Chief Executive
Director of Environmental Services
Director of Leisure and Community Development
Director of Service Transformation
PCSP/Member Services Manager
IT Manager
Member Services Officers
Mayor's Chaplain

Commencement of the Meeting

At the commencement of the meeting, The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Givan, welcomed those present to the first remote meeting of Council, which was being live streamed to enable members of the public to hear and see the proceedings. A total of 13 Elected Members were present in the Council Chamber and the remainder were attending the meeting remotely. Councillor Givan thanked the Council's technical staff and contractor whose assistance had made holding this remote meeting possible.

Due to the current COVID19 crisis, the civic building remained closed to the general public; however, Councillor Givan gave an assurance that the Council was still very much open for business as it continued to deliver its critical and essential services, and much more, to its citizens.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Givan, requested that all mobile phones be switched off or put on silent for the duration of the meeting.

At this point, the PCSP/Member Services Manager read out the names of the Elected Members in attendance at the meeting.

1. Business of The Right Worshipful the Mayor

1.1 Prayers

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Givan, expressed condolences in respect of the following bereavements:

- Frances Stanfield – mother-in-law of Pauline Stanfield, Member Services;
- Sally Dunwoody – mother of Valerie Martin, Irish Linen Centre & Museum;
- Basil George Moorhead – father of Brian Moorhead, Central Services Depot;
- Philip Copeland – brother of Vincent Copeland, Procurement;
- John Manderson – brother of Patricia Pedlow, Performance Audit & Risk;
- Valerie McKibbin – mother of Paddy McKibbin, Building Control;
- Jim Donaldson, father of Sir Jeffrey Donaldson;
- Eleanor Agnew – aunt of Alderman D Drysdale; and
- Charles Poots – former Member of Lisburn Borough Council.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Givan, welcomed to the meeting Pastor Gordon Walker, Carryduff Baptist Church, who gave an address and said a prayer, during which he remembered the above bereaved families. He also remembered all those who had lost their lives due to coronavirus and praised the staff in the National Health Service (NHS) for their selfless hard work, especially during this pandemic. Councillor A Givan thanked Pastor Walker for his attendance and he left the meeting.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Givan, referred to the recent death of Mr C Poots, who had been a Member of the former Lisburn Borough Council for 24 years, had served as Deputy Mayor and was also a Freeman of the City. The Mayor expressed his condolences to the Poots family at this sad time. As a mark of respect for Mr Poots, a minute's silence was observed.

A number of Members, including his grandson, Councillor C McCreedy, paid heartfelt tributes to Mr Poots who, it was stated, had been a man of the people who loved his family and friends, enjoyed farming life, his local community, politics and most important to him was his faith.

1.2 Mayor's Engagements

The Council noted a number of engagements attended by The Right Worshipful the Mayor since the last meeting of Council.

2. Apologies

It was agreed to accept an apology for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of Alderman D Drysdale.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest expressed at this point.

During the meeting the following declaration of interest was made:

- Alderman M Henderson in respect of Item 12.3, Notice of Motion on the subject of Freedom of the City for the HSC, given that the company he worked for supplied goods to HSCNI.

4. Council Minutes

It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Alderman J Baird and agreed that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 25 February, 2020 be confirmed and signed.

It was proposed by Alderman M Henderson, seconded by Alderman S P Porter and agreed that the minutes of the special meeting of Council held on 18 March, 2020 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

On a proposal by Councillor U Mackin, seconded by Alderman M Henderson, it was agreed that the following legal document be signed at the meeting:

- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council with Devlin Consulting Limited of 3-4th floor, 105 Howard Street, North Shields, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE30 1NA (Sub-Consultant) and AECOM Limited of Aldgate Tower, 2 Leman Street, London, E1 8FA (Consultant) – Sub-Consultant Warranty relating to Dundonald International Ice Bowl.

8. Adoption of Minutes of Committees

Leisure and Community Development Committee

3 March 2020

Proposed by Alderman J Tinsley
Seconded by Councillor H Legge

Alderman J Tinsley advised that a query raised by Councillor N Trimble in relation to opening hours in activity centres would be addressed at a future time when normal business had resumed.

Environmental Services Committee

4 March 2020

Proposed by Alderman J Baird
Seconded by Councillor M Gregg

Councillor S Carson left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (2.46 pm).

Development Committee

4 March 2020

Proposed by Alderman A G Ewart
Seconded by Alderman W J Dillon

Councillor S Carson returned to the meeting and Councillor S Skillen left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (2.48 pm).

As there would not be another meeting of the Development Committee until after the Annual Meeting of Council, Alderman A G Ewart took this opportunity to thank the Vice-Chairman, Alderman W J Dillon, Committee Members and Council Officers for the assistance they had afforded him during his term as Chairman. He particularly thanked the Director of Service Transformation for having kept him updated daily during the last number of months.

Capital Projects Committee

10 March 2020

Proposed by Councillor R T Beckett
Seconded by Councillor G McCleave

Councillor S Skillen returned to the meeting during consideration of this item of business (2.50 pm).

Councillor R T Beckett thanked Members of the Capital Projects Committee, from across all political parties, for their contribution to the Committee over the past year. He also thanked Council Officers for their hard work and asked that the Director of Service Transformation pass on his thanks to relevant staff.

Corporate Services Committee

11 March 2020

Proposed by Councillor R Carlin
Seconded by Alderman S P Porter

Councillor R Carlin thanked the Vice-Chairman, Alderman S P Porter, Committee Members and the Chief Executive for their assistance over the past year. Alderman S P Porter concurred with these sentiments and asked that the Chief Executive pass on to the relevant staff, the Committee's thanks for all their work during what had been a very busy year.

Planning Committee**3 February 2020**

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting of 3 February, 2020 had been circulated for noting only as these minutes had been agreed at the subsequent meeting of the Planning Committee on 3 March, 2020. It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Councillor O Gawith and agreed that their contents be noted.

Councillor D J Craig thanked Committee Members for the work and efforts they had put into the Planning Committee over the last year. He stated that over the past number of months there had been huge difficulty getting the Committee up and running again; however, the Committee would be holding a meeting on Tuesday, 2 June. Councillor Craig paid tribute to the Director of Service Transformation, Head of Planning and Capital Development and all staff in the Planning Unit. Whilst some parts of the Council were unable to function due to COVID19 restrictions, the Planning Unit was still functioning and hundreds of planning applications had been processed in the last number of months. Councillor O Gawith concurred with the sentiments expressed by Councillor D J Craig and thanked him for his chairmanship of the Committee during a very difficult year.

At this point, Alderman J Baird, Chairman of the Environmental Services Committee, thanked Members of that Committee for their hard work over the last year. He also commended Council Officers who, especially during the last 3 months, had been under great pressure to maintain much-needed services throughout the City. He expressed his well wishes to the incoming Chairman of the Committee.

9. Report from Chief Executive

It was agreed that the report and recommendations of the Chief Executive be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below.

Item for Decision

9.1 Interim Standing Orders and Remote Meeting Protocol

Members were provided with a copy of Interim Standing Orders and a Remote Meeting Protocol for use during the COVID19 pandemic. Standing Order 27.2 (Amendment) stated that any motion to add to, vary or revoke Standing Orders would, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned, without discussion, to the next ordinary meeting of the Council. In order for the Interim Standing Orders and Protocol to apply to this meeting, the Council was required to suspend Standing Order 27.2 for the purposes of facilitating decision-making during this pandemic for this item only as per Standing Order 27.1 (Suspension). It was proposed by Alderman M Henderson, seconded by Alderman J Baird and agreed that the Interim Standing Orders and the Remote Meeting Protocol be approved and that Standing Order 27.2 be suspended for this item only.

9.2 Decision Log

The Chief Executive reported that all decisions taken under delegated authority granted to him at the special meeting of Council on 18 March, 2020, in consultation with The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of relevant committees, had been formally recorded in report format and issued to Elected Members on a weekly basis. It was agreed that the contents of the Decision Logs be noted.

9.3 Council Response to Coronavirus (COVID19) – Operational Delivery

Members were provided with a report by the Chief Executive in relation to the operational delivery of the Council's response to the Coronavirus (COVID19) pandemic. The Chief Executive also provided a verbal report in which he advised that, by the end of June, he would expect to have greater clarity on NI Executive support to the Council, the anticipated year end position and, hopefully, a possible road to recovery for the Council's income streams. This would provide Members with more clarity on year end budgets, the 2021/22 estimates process and affordability limits to allow capital programme priorities to be reset. As affordability limits influenced the capital programme and investment plans, the Chief Executive anticipated that Officers would host a number of workshops over the summer to detail borrowing capacity with a view to shaping discussions around investment priorities. Whilst operational decisions continued to be made at short notice, the Chief Executive stated that it was crucial for Members to have a full and clear understanding of the Council's financial position and he would review delegated authority to Officers in time for consideration at the next Council meeting.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Alderman M Henderson and agreed that:

- (a) the progress made by the Council to support its communities and businesses during the pandemic be noted;
- (b) approval be given to the financial adjustments to minimise the impact on revenue balances during 2020/21, as set out in the Chief Executive's report. The Chief Executive agreed to provide Members with further detail in respect of projects that had been delayed and items not received due to the lockdown towards the end of the financial year; and
- (c) relevant Committee meetings be arranged within the next 6-8 weeks to ensure Members were fully briefed. Dates for such meetings would be arranged with Chairmen after the Annual Meeting of Council.

During discussion, a number of Members paid tribute to the Chief Executive for his leadership and thanked all Council staff, particularly those on the frontline, for their hard work in delivering essential services during these unprecedented times. The Chief Executive had briefed Party Group Leaders on a weekly basis and had also met with political parties and this was appreciated. Members also put on record their thanks to DEA Coordinators who had been proactively engaging with Elected Members, community groups, partner agencies and individuals to ensure distribution of food parcels, signposting to services and delivery of prescriptions and shopping. It was suggested that it would be beneficial for the DEA teams to be maintained moving forward and for their remit

9.3 Council Response to Coronavirus (COVID19) – Operational Delivery (Contd)

to be expanded to include engagement with young people, churches and schools. Council communication with its residents and through social media, in what were rapidly changing situations, was commended and thanks were expressed to the staff involved in that area of work.

Reference was made to the commencement time of 2.00 pm for Council meetings, as referred to in the Interim Standing Orders, and it was suggested that, with the agreement of the incoming Mayor, a start time of 7.00 pm may be more suitable, given that a lot of Members had returned to work.

In response to a request by Councillor S Skillen, the Chief Executive agreed that Members would be provided with a report in respect of pest control, given the increase in the presence of rats over the last number of months.

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 Misogyny and Transmisogyny
Councillor S Lee

Alderman A Grehan left, and returned to, the meeting during consideration of this item of business (3.19 pm and 3.22 pm respectively), as did Councillor D Honeyford (3.23 pm and 3.24 pm respectively).

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

“This Council recognises the impact of misogyny and transmisogyny on those affected by it, as well as the role these attitudes play in a variety of crimes, including harassment, assault, sexual assault and hate crimes, and on the career choices and personal lives of women, girls and non-binary people.

The Council supports the inclusion of misogyny as a standalone offence and as a category of hate crime, recognising crimes targeted at women including transwomen as hate crimes based on misogyny, and will write a letter to that effect to Judge Desmond Marrinan, as part of his ongoing review of hate crime legislation in Northern Ireland.

12.1 Misogyny and Transmisogyny (Contd)
Councillor S Lee

The Council supports also the Raise Your Voice Project, which tackles sexual harassment and sexual violence across Northern Ireland, by placing posters in all Council properties to raise awareness of the project”.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor S Lee and seconded by Councillor M Guy.

By way of providing context to his Notice of Motion, Councillor S Lee advised that, last June, the Department of Justice had launched a review of hate crime legislation in Northern Ireland, led by Judge Desmond Marrinan, who had been considering whether the categories of hate crime should be extended and whether the current approach for dealing with hate crime was adequate. The terms of reference for the review stated that hate crime was used to describe offences motivated by hostility and abuse based on a characteristic of the victim. Given that definition, Councillor Lee stated that it was difficult to justify how gender identity had, until now, not been included in categories of hate crime. Unfortunately, violence against women and girls was endemic across the world and responses to it were inadequate legally, institutionally and societally. Councillor Lee stated that the legal system was not equipped to deal with issues that affected women more widely and it was necessary for the system to change to recognise crimes targeted at women, those who were transgender and those who were non-binary, simply because of their gender identity. He stated that misogyny was a scourge on society that affected everyone. It seemed to be evident that every woman, non-binary and transgender person had experienced misogyny in some form or another. Misogyny had not been taken seriously enough in society and, to begin to tackle it, the first step would be to acknowledge it existed in the first place by including it in the categories of hate crime and treating it as a standalone offence. This would allow women, transgender and non-binary people to have their experience recognised in the law and give them the same recourse to justice as other victims and survivors of hate crime. A number of police forces in England had already led the way on this by reclassifying misogyny as a hate crime and this had made a tangible difference to the lives of women and girls due to increased confidence in policing and the criminal justice system. In relation to the second part of his Notice of Motion, Councillor Lee provided information on the work of the Raise Your Voice Project.

Councillor M Guy stated that the Raise Your Voice campaign, which was being supported through this Notice of Motion, existed because sexual harassment, sexual violence and victim-blaming existed. These acts disproportionately impacted women because misogyny existed. She went on to outline her support for Councillor Lee’s Notice of Motion, quoting statistics released this year relating to the killing of women and girls in the UK in 2018.

A number of Members spoke in support of the Notice of Motion by Councillor Lee, namely Councillors Jenny Palmer, S Hughes, R Carlin, J Gallen, A Swan and M Gregg.

12.1 Misogyny and Transmisogyny (Contd)
Councillor S Lee

Councillor N Anderson voiced his opposition to the Notice of Motion. He stated that there were things in the Motion that everyone could broadly agree with, eg. repudiation of crimes such as harassment, assault, domestic abuse, sexual assault, online assaults against women, particularly women in political positions. These crimes violated the autonomy of the individual. The State had a responsibility to pursue these crimes in support of victims. The Council had a very strong history of working with the PSNI, through the PCSP, and was committed to working with its partners to tackle these crimes. However, he did not consider that this Notice of Motion would necessarily assist in this endeavour, but may unwittingly complicate the job of policing these issues by promoting confusion. Separate and robust tools should be applied in this area and evidence monitored moving forward. Councillor Anderson referred to the Notice of Motion's implications for free speech. He stated that definitions in the Notice of Motion were very wide in scope and for law this was problematic. The law needed to have a very clear definition, especially in relation to the issue of speech. Legal definition should not weaken the rights of those with deeply and legitimately held beliefs, including religious beliefs. No-one should feel unable to express their convictions and be allowed to be critical of any institution or any idea. When it came to the speech issues, Councillor Anderson wondered who would act as the sensor and arbiter of attitudes and stated that this put the State in a very difficult position. He stated that there were unintended difficulties associated with supporting this Notice of Motion.

In response to comments by Councillor N Anderson, Councillor S Lee accepted that freedom of speech was of the utmost importance; however, abusive language was not covered by freedom of speech. No-one had the human right to call people names or sexually abuse them by the use of crude and sexual language.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Givan, referred to Councillor Anderson's opposition to the Notice of Motion and stated that it would be remiss of any Members to think that in some way, as a party or as individuals, the DUP Group hated women or would seek to be violent towards women, as nothing could be further from the truth. There was no hatred intended in the DUP's position on this matter. The party considered this legislation was very vague and Councillor Givan voiced his concern over its interpretation of how people expressed themselves. He considered the comments about free speech were fair; in a free society everyone had a legitimate right to say what was in their minds and hearts.

At the request of Councillor M Gregg, a recorded vote was taken on this matter. The proposal of the Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor S Lee was declared 'carried', the voting being as follows:

12.1 Misogyny and Transmisogyny (Contd)
Councillor S Lee

In favour: Alderman J Baird, Councillor R Carlin, Councillor S Eastwood, Councillor J Gallen, Councillor O Gawith, Councillor M Gregg, Alderman A Grehan, Councillor M Guy, Alderman M Henderson, Councillor D Honeyford, Councillor S Hughes, Councillor S Lee, Councillor H Legge, Councillor S Lowry, Deputy Mayor Councillor J McCarthy, Councillor G McCleave, Councillor A McIntyre, Councillor R McLernon, Alderman S Martin, Councillor T Mitchell, Councillor Jenny Palmer, Councillor John Palmer, Councillor A Swan and Councillor N Trimble **(24)**

Against: Councillor N Anderson, Councillor R T Beckett, Councillor S Carson, Councillor D J Craig, Alderman A G Ewart, Councillor A P Ewing, Councillor A Gowan, Councillor J Laverty, Councillor C McCready, Councillor U Mackin, Alderman S P Porter, Councillor S Skillen, Alderman J Tinsley and The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Givan **(14)**

Abstain: Alderman W J Dillon **(1)**

12.2 Changing Places Toilets
Councillor M Guy

Alderman A Grehan and Alderman W J Dillon left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (4.07 pm and 4.08 pm respectively).

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

“That this Council will proactively enable Changing Places toilets within our council area, by committing to include Changing Places toilets, in addition to disabled access toilets, in all new council facilities used by the public, where reasonable and in line with the established guidance.

And to retro fit Changing Places toilets to appropriate council Buildings, where practicable, during planned upgrade programmes.

In addition, the Council will proactively encourage those upgrading buildings, to include a Changing Places toilet as a retrofit, within building project proposals, by signposting them to the latest guidance and information.

Finally, this Council welcomes the commitment made in the recent budget by the Chancellor, to create a £30 million ‘Changing Places Fund’. In response, we will write to the Minister for Finance to ask that:

- money allocated to Northern Ireland as a consequence of this, is ring fenced for Changing Places provision; and

12.2 Changing Places Toilets (Contd)
Councillor M Guy

- Northern Ireland building regulations are amended to bring them into line with recent changes in Scotland and pledged changes in England, that makes installing a Changing Places toilet mandatory for certain categories of building”.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor M Guy and seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor J McCarthy.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Givan, in line with Standing Order 16.1 (6), advised that this Notice of Motion would be taken forward by the Chief Executive through the relevant Committee/s. He further pointed out that the Council had led the way on this issue, having incorporated a Changing Places Toilet in the Island Civic Centre during its construction some 20 years ago.

12.3 Freedom of the City for the HSC
Alderman J Tinsley

During consideration of this item of business:

- Alderman J Baird left, and returned to, the meeting (4.11 pm and 4.13 pm);
- Alderman A Grehan returned to the meeting (4.11 pm);
- Alderman W J Dillon returned to the meeting (4.13 pm);
- Alderman S P Porter left, and returned to, the meeting (4.19 pm and 4.23 pm);
- the Director of Environmental Services left the meeting (4.29 pm);
- Councillor S Eastwood left, and returned to, the meeting (4.36 pm and 4.38 pm); and
- Councillor S Hughes left, and returned to, the meeting (4.39 pm and 4.41 pm).

A copy of the following Notice of Motion in the name of Alderman J Tinsley had been circulated to Members with the notice convening the meeting:

“In recognition of its valuable service since its formation in 1948 to the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area and to Northern Ireland in general, this council resolves to bestow the Freedom of the City on the National Health Service (NHS).”

Alderman J Tinsley advised that he wished to amend National Health Service in the Notice of Motion to Health and Social Care (HSC) and for the purposes of the Motion, this was to be regarded as representative of everyone delivering healthcare in the community.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley and seconded by Alderman W J Dillon.

12.3 Freedom of the City for the HSC (Contd)
Alderman J Tinsley

Alderman J Tinsley stated that it gave him great pleasure to bring forward this Notice of Motion. Northern Ireland as a whole had benefited from a fantastic health service over the years. He paid tribute to the staff who made up that service, caring for new-borns right through to providing end-of-life care. Most people had experienced the help of the Health Service at some stage and Alderman Tinsley referred to his most recent experience of this when he had lost his mother a number of months ago. Every single healthcare worker had shown dedication and compassion. He referred to the current pandemic, throughout which communities had taken part in “Clap for the NHS” on Thursday evenings and stated that a fitting tribute to thank the Health Service for its work not only now, but over the decades, would be for the Council to bestow the honour of Freedom of the City on the HSC. Alderman Tinsley advised that this matter would be progressed through the Corporate Services Committee and suggested that, in order that as many healthcare workers as possible could be involved in the event, consideration should be given to hosting a garden party to mark to the occasion of bestowing the Freedom of the City on the HSC.

In seconding the Notice of Motion, Alderman W J Dillon requested that Alderman J Tinsley amend his proposal to incorporate the hosting of a garden party at a suitable location. Alderman Tinsley acceded to this request.

Alderman Dillon went on to tell his own personal experience of the care and treatment he had received from the Health Service during his period of ill-health over the last year and paid tribute to each and every one of those who had looked after him, including those carers who had attended to him in his home after discharge from hospital. He referred to the tremendous pressures under which staff worked and stated that it would be an honour for the Council to bestow the Freedom of the City on the HSC in recognition of the hard work and dedication of all its staff.

A number of Members spoke in support of this Notice of Motion, many recounting their own experiences of the Health Service – namely the Deputy Mayor Councillor J McCarthy and Councillors S Carson, A McIntyre, D J Craig, G McCleave, S Lee, O Gawith, D Honeyford and J Gallen. Praise was given to the selfless work of staff in dealing with the current COVID19 pandemic, with many healthcare workers themselves succumbing to the virus and sadly losing their own lives whilst looking after others. The vast majority of those who had lost their lives were from a Black, Asian or ethnic minority background and it was hoped that research would be carried out to ascertain why those people had been particularly exposed. The UK Government u-turn on the surcharge for migrant healthcare staff was welcomed. Reference was also made to the drastic action healthcare workers had been forced to take in the past to get recognition for the work they carried out and to protect patients, eg. the junior doctor contract issue and, more recently, the nurses’ strikes. There was currently reduced access to GPs but the reason for this was that they were attending COVID19 wards 3 days a week, as well as running their own surgeries.

12.3 Freedom of the City for the HSC (Contd)
Alderman J Tinsley

In addition to thanking healthcare workers for their hard work and efforts in dealing with those affected by COVID19 in recent months, tribute was paid to frontline Council staff who had continued to deliver critical and essential services throughout the City in these challenging times. Residents of the area were also commended for having stayed home in an effort not to overwhelm the Health Service.

Alderman J Tinsley thanked Members for their support for his Notice of Motion which, incorporating his own amendment and that requested by Alderman W J Dillon, would now read:

“In recognition of its valuable service since its formation in 1948 to the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area and to Northern Ireland in general, this council resolves to bestow the Freedom of the City on Health & Social Care (HSC). The Council would consider the logistics of having a garden party type event, at a suitable location, to include a broad spectrum of those involved in the HSC”.

The above Notice of Motion in the name of Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Alderman W J Dillon, was put to the Council and unanimously agreed.

13. Confidential Business

There was no confidential business.

14. Any Other Business

14.1 Thanks to Staff and Local Groups
Alderman S P Porter

Alderman S P Porter referred to the thanks expressed earlier in the meeting to Council staff. He also wished to extend his thanks to the amazing effort by community groups, church groups, sports groups, local lodges and individuals right across the City area. Without their work on the ground, the team effort that had been so successful would not have been achieved. He further commended statutory agencies and individual businesses that were doing so much during the current crisis.

14.2 Interim Standing Orders
Alderman M Henderson

Alderman M Henderson referred to the Interim Standing Orders approved earlier in the meeting and enquired if a caveat could be applied that the requirement for these be reviewed on a 3 month basis. The Chief Executive explained that the Interim Standing Orders would only remain in place for as long as remote meetings were being held, but this matter would be monitored.

14.3 Antisocial Behaviour – The Brambles and Ballymacoss Pitches
Councillor Jenny Palmer

Councillor Jenny Palmer asked that all Members unite in sending a clear message of condemnation in respect of antisocial behaviour that had taken place in the area of The Brambles and Ballymacoss Pitches the previous weekend. Crowds of youths had gathered and, fuelled with alcohol, had fought with each other and smashed bottles all over the pitches. The staff and manager in the nearby Supervalu shop had been threatened and abused by groups for refusing to sell them alcohol. These were the same staff that had been praised as key workers, serving the community at risk to themselves during the ongoing pandemic, and Councillor Palmer paid tribute to such staff for continuing to ensure the food chain remained open. Councillor Palmer stated that there needed to be a combined effort to address the issue of antisocial behaviour and, together, everyone had a role to play in making the City safe. There were groups within the community that had been working for many years, eg Lisburn Safe and Dreamscheme, but because of COVID19 they had not been able to get to engage with young people. There was an issue in terms of the focus now being moved away from lockdown and young people wanting to be out and about. However, with that came responsibility and young people should not be out causing antisocial behaviour and the criminal damage that went along with it. Councillor Palmer advised that she had spoken to Superintendent D Beck about this issue and asked if there was some way of moving forward and problem-solving around this issue. She thanked the PSNI for having done the difficult job of dispersing the youths and further commended the Head of Parks & Amenities for his involvement in having the pitches cleared of broken glass and debris, as well as community leaders who had also assisted in this regard. Councillor Palmer stated that it was necessary to discuss how this matter would be dealt with moving forward; this behaviour could not be allowed to happen in the City, it was bringing communities down and was damaging to society. The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Givan, stated that everyone would agree with the sentiments expressed by Councillor Palmer.

14.4 Cycling and Walking Champion
Councillor R Carlin

Councillor R Carlin referred to the recent announcement by the Minister for Infrastructure in relation to the new Cycling and Walking Champion and he asked if the Council had reached out to this Champion as yet. He would like this Council to be at the forefront of trying to improve cycling infrastructure and would be supportive of anything this Champion could do to get the Carryduff Greenway project moving forward. In response to these comments, the Chief Executive confirmed that Officers were already looking at this matter in terms of which areas the Council may wish to bring forward. He also advised that he had been appointed as the SOLACE representative on the new Cycling Working Group set up by the Department for Infrastructure.

14.5 Bryson House Recycling Boxes
Councillor N Anderson

Councillor N Anderson referred to temporary measures that had been in place in relation to the separation of items for recycling. He hoped that Bryson House

14.5 Bryson House Recycling Boxes (Contd)
Councillor N Anderson

had got some of its issues resolved and asked if there was any timeline for the resumption of normal recycling measures in Castlereagh South and East. The Chief Executive confirmed that work was continuing with Bryson House to overcome difficulties. An element of re-education was required with some residents in relation to how they disposed of their waste. Bryson House had sent out additional workers to accompany bins to support that education and that may continue for the foreseeable future. The Council was continuing to liaise with Bryson House and with its neighbouring councils to get more consistency in that message across the board.

14.6 Dog Fouling and Street Cleansing
Councillor N Anderson

Councillor N Anderson paid tribute to staff involved in street cleansing and thanked the Council for having provided some litter bins for the disposal of dog waste. He stated that there were other locations in Castlereagh South that would benefit from street cleansing and the provisions of extra bins and dog bags. The Chief Executive thanked Councillor Anderson for his comments regarding street cleansing and asked that he advise the Director of Environmental Services of any other suggested locations for bins and these would be considered.

14.7 Antisocial Behaviour – The Brambles and Ballymacoss Pitches
Councillor D J Craig

Alderman M Henderson left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (5.01 pm), as did Councillor M Gregg (5.04 pm).

Councillor D J Craig referred to the above matter raised earlier by Councillor Jenny Palmer and stated that there had been similar problems in Lambeg. He paid tribute to Superintendent D Beck for dealing with this. These were very frustrating issues, but were isolated issues. He commended how well young people in general had behaved. There were thousands of young people out there and, unfortunately, there was a small handful that got carried away with drink and bad behaviour. That was an issue for the police to deal with.

14.8 Financial Reports to Members
Councillor D J Craig

Councillor D J Craig referred to an agreement at the special meeting of Council held on 18 March that monthly updates would be provided to Members on the Council's financial position and enquired as to why such reports had not been issued. The Chief Executive confirmed that a financial report had been shared with Party Group Leaders a couple of weeks previously and agreed to provide a copy of this to all Members.

14.9 Samaritans Banners
Councillor R T Beckett

Councillor A P Ewing left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (5.07 pm).

Councillor R T Beckett referred to the stress people were currently under in these unprecedented times and advised that he had been approached by the Regional Director and Chief Executive of the Samaritans, who had contacted the Council requesting permission to erect banners on railings at Wallace Park or the front of Council buildings giving helpline numbers for anyone needing their services. However, the response had been that planning permission would have to be applied for to erect such banners, which could take a couple of months. Councillor Beckett asked that the Chief Executive dispense of this red tape and explore the possibility of putting up banners at some Council premises. The Chief Executive agreed to look into this matter and come back to Councillor Beckett as soon as possible.

14.10 Commercial Waste
Councillor U Mackin

Councillor U Mackin expressed his personal thanks to the Chief Executive, Directors and Council staff for their work at this particular time.

Councillor U Mackin welcomed the reopening of the three household recycling centres and enquired as to when commercial waste would resume again. He also enquired as to the Council procedures regarding the issue of commercial licences for waste disposal. The Chief Executive confirmed that commercial waste was actively being considered. He agreed to liaise with the Director of Environmental Services after the meeting and respond to Councillor Mackin following that.

14.11 Memorial Works
Councillor John Palmer

Councillor M Gregg returned to the meeting during consideration of this item of business (5.08 pm).

Councillor John Palmer thanked the Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing and his staff for having taken the decision, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Leisure and Community Development Committee, to allow monumental works to recommence at cemeteries.

14.12 Tar Spraying
Alderman W J Dillon

Alderman W J Dillon referred to an incident last week in the vicinity of his home when Roads Service staff had been spraying tar over potholes. He stated that staff must have forgotten to turn the machine off and, when driving down the road, tar was sprayed over fences, hedges, shrubs, pillars, etc. Alderman Dillon had rang to complain and was told that this was not a priority route and it would be attended to eventually. He asked that a letter be sent to Roads Service

14.12 Tar Spraying (Contd)
Alderman W J Dillon

asking that this matter be addressed and to ensure that similar incidents did not happen in the future.

In response to these comments, Councillor O Gawith explained that he had been in touch with Roads Service who had advised that the issue was that a pipe had split on the tar spraying machine. Roads Service had now been in contact with all affected residents and had agreed to provide compensation for all remedial works needed to fix damaged property.

14.13 Delivery of Food Parcels
Alderman A Grehan

Alderman A Grehan, on behalf the Alliance Party, put on record her thanks to the Head of Sports Services, DEA Coordinators and the staff deployed to deliver food parcels. They had gone above and beyond the call of duty and had managed to have food boxes distributed at a very difficult time. She also thanked Lisburn Food Bank and the Citizens Advice Team in Lisburn for the work they had carried out.

Conclusion of the Meeting

At the conclusion of the meeting, The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Givan, thanked those present for their attendance.

There being no further business for consideration, the meeting was terminated at 5.15 pm.

Mayor