

**LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Special Meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held in the Council Chamber and Remote Locations on Thursday, 25 September, 2025 at 6:00 pm**

**PRESENT IN CHAMBER:**

Councillor D Lynch (Chairperson)

Mr E Jardine (Independent Member and Vice-Chairperson)

Aldermen O Gawith and J Tinsley

Councillors J Bamford, D Bassett, S Burns, A P Ewing

**PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:**

Aldermen S P Porter

Councillors J Gallen, S Lowry, B Magee, M McKeever, R McLernon

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT IN CHAMBER:**

Councillors B Higginson and G Hynds

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive (Remote)  
Director of Organisation Development and Innovation  
Head of Finance  
Internal Auditor  
IT Officer  
Member Services Officers (BS and EW)

**Northern Ireland Audit Office:**

Mr R Ross

**RBCA**

Mr B Stewart

**Commencement of the Meeting**

The Chairperson, Councillor D Lynch, welcomed those present to the Special Meeting of the Governance & Audit Committee. He pointed out that, unless the item on the agenda was considered under confidential business, this meeting would be audio recorded. In accordance with the Protocol for Remote Meetings, the Chairperson asked that those attending via zoom ensure that the meeting could not be seen or heard by any other person at their remote location when confidential business was being considered.

Alderman S P Porter joined the meeting at 6.02 pm.

Commencement of the Meeting (Cont'd)

The Chairperson, Councillor D Lynch, asked that mobile phones be put on silent or switched off for the duration of the meeting. The Director of Organisation Development and Innovation outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. Apologies

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of Councillor A Martin and the Internal Audit Manager.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

At this point, the Chairperson extended a welcome to Mr R Ross, Northern Ireland Audit Office, and Mr B Stewart, RBCA.

3. Confidential Business

The matters contained in the confidential report would be dealt with “in Committee” due to containing information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

“In Committee”

It was proposed by Councillor A P Ewing, seconded by Councillor D Bassett, and agreed that the following matters be considered “in Committee” in the absence of members of the press and public being present.

3.1 Report of Head of Finance

3.1.1 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council - Statement of Accounts for Year Ended 31 March 2025

(Report will never become available - Final certified accounts will be published)

In addition to the narrative report, Members had been provided with a copy of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council’s Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2025.

The Head of Finance presented the report and, together with the Director of Organisation Development & Innovation, responded to questions and comments from two Members, it being noted that the next item on the agenda would address the issues raised.

3.1.1 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council - Statement of Accounts for Year Ended 31 March 2025 (Cont'd)

It was proposed by Councillor D Bassett, seconded by Alderman O Gawith, and agreed that, in line with delegated authority granted to the Committee by the Council in December 2023, the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2025 (which included the Governance statement) be approved and submitted to the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

3.1.2 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council – Draft Report to Those Charged with Governance 2024-2025  
(Report will never become available - Final certified accounts will be published)

In addition to the narrative report, Members had been provided with the Draft Report to Those Charged with Governance 2024-2025 as issued by the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

The Head of Finance provided the Committee with a summary of some of the key issues contained in the Draft Report to Those Charged with Governance 2024-2025, it being noted that a final version would be presented to the Committee in December 2025.

Mr B Stewart addressed the Committee during which he highlighted some of the key points in the report. Mr Stewart, along with the Head of Finance and the Director of Organisation Development & Innovation, responded to a number of comments and questions raised by Members in connection with the report.

Alderman J Tinsley left the meeting during the above discussion at 6.25 pm.

The Report to Those Charged with Governance in regard to Lisburn & Castlereagh Council for 2024-2025 was noted by the Committee.

The Head of Finance undertook to provide information requested during the discussion to the Members concerned.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor D Bassett, seconded by Councillor A P Ewing and agreed to come “out of Committee” and normal business was resumed.

The Chairperson, Councillor D Lynch, thanked Members for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 6.42 pm.

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Mayor/Chairman