

**LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL****Minutes of Meeting of the Environment & Sustainability Committee held in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, and in remote locations on Wednesday 7th May 2025 at 6.00 pm.****PRESENT IN CHAMBER  
(COMMITTEE):**

Councillor G Hynds (Vice-Chair)

Aldermen J Baird, A McIntyre and J Tinsley

Councillors J Bamford, S Burns, C McCready,  
M McKeever and N Parker**PRESENT IN REMOTE  
LOCATION (COMMITTEE):**

Alderman S Skillen and Councillor G McCleave

**IN ATTENDANCE:**Acting Director of Environmental Services (RH)  
Head of Service (Building Control & Sustainability) (CD)  
Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational  
Services) (WM)  
Environmental Health Manager (RL)  
Member Services Officer (BS & EW)

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson, Councillor G Hynds, chaired the meeting.

Councillor Hynds welcomed those present to the meeting and advised that it would be audio recorded unless the item on the agenda was to be considered under confidential business. He stated that unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per the Council's Standing Orders, and asked that mobile phones be put on silent or switched off for the duration of the meeting.

In accordance with the Protocol for Remote Meetings, the Vice Chairperson asked those attending via zoom to ensure that the meeting could not be seen or heard by any other person at their remote location when confidential business was being considered. He also asked that they keep their camera on so that the attendees in the Chamber could see those persons attending on a remote basis. The Vice Chairperson proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. **Apologies**

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of the Chairperson, Councillor P Catney, Alderman O Gawith and Councillor A Gowan.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest declared.

3. Report by Acting Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk & Emergency Planning)

3.1 Food Standards Agency: Consultation response on proposed Amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland)  
(Item 4.1 on the agenda refers)

The report by the Acting Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk & Emergency Planning) detailed the background and key issues in regard to proposed amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland). The six areas of proposed changes were listed in the Officer's report.

A link to the Food Standards Agency's consultation documents had been provided within the report and a copy of the draft response to be submitted on behalf of the Council had been appended to the report.

The Environmental Health Manager responded to a question from a Member in regard to any impact on the Council as a result of the proposed amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance, it being noted that there would be no significant impact on the Council.

It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Alderman J Baird and agreed that, in line with delegated authority granted to the Committee by the Council, the draft response be accepted as the Council's response to the above consultation and be submitted to the Food Standards Agency.

4. Report of Acting Director of Environmental Services

4.1 RCV Procurement Timeline  
(item 3.1 on the agenda refers)

The Acting Director of Environmental Services referred to the two procurement exercises had been carried out in the 2024/2025 financial year for the purchase of eight RCV's and also the request by Members that Officers provide a detailed report providing a timeline for the two procurement exercises.

A copy of the documented timeline, from the approval by the Committee in September 2024 until the order being submitted in February 2025, had been appended to the Officer's report.

The Acting Director advised that in relation to future procurements of additional vehicles for delivery in 2026/2027 and given the lead-in times, it was anticipated that a report would come to the Committee in September 2025.

#### 4.1 RCV Procurement Timeline (Cont'd)

The Acting Director responded to questions from the Committee in connection with a number of issues arising from the report, including:

- lead-in times and delivery timescales for the above-mentioned procurement exercises
- the time difference between ordering the first four RCVs following ratification of the Committee's decision and the ordering of the second four RCVs following ratification
- any work that might be required to the new RCVs prior to going out on the road
- the suggestion that separate reports come forward in September if there are other new vehicles being procured over and above RCVs, in order to avoid any delays in the order for RCVs.

A Member requested that the estimated delivery times be included in the timeline document going forward and another Member asked that Officers take some learning from these procurement issues in order to avoid similar delays in the future.

Following discussion it was agreed that the content of the RCV Procurement Timelines be noted.

The Acting Director gave an assurance that, subject to resources, the reports on additional procurement of RCVs, and any other required vehicle, would be presented to the Committee in September.

### 5. Any Other Business

#### 5.1 Lack of Business for Consideration Vice Chairperson, Councillor G Hynds

The Vice Chairperson, Councillor G Hynds, expressed his frustration on the lack of items for consideration at some Committee meetings recently, including the short agenda for the meeting that evening. He was aware that other Members had raised this same issue recently at other Committee meetings. The Vice Chairperson enquired why this was the case.

Alderman A McIntyre concurred with the Vice Chairperson's comments.

(This matter was raised again under item 5.5)

#### 5.2 Technical Issues with Depot Telephone System and Online Bin Collection Calendar Alderman A McIntyre

Alderman A McIntyre expressed thanks to the Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) and his team for having attended promptly to a recent missed bin collection in Sandy Lane.

Alderman McIntyre raised the issue of the online bin collection calendar which did not reflect what had been agreed locally and also that he had been contacted by

## 5.2 Technical Issues with Depot Telephone System and Online Bin Collection Calendar (Cont'd)

constituents about difficulties in getting through to staff on the telephone system despite having followed the instructions.

The Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services) explained that his team had picked up on the problem of calls not being answered and that the problem seemed to be that the queuing function was no longer working; and unfortunately following work on the system by the engineers, the system still was not functioning correctly, and required further work. The Head of Service was hopeful that the telephone system was now working fully and apologised to those residents who had experienced difficulties in contacting his office in recent weeks.

The Head of Service also explained that the online bin collection calendar was also down currently due to technical problems. He assured that his team was continuing to work through these problems and hoped to have a resolution as soon as possible. He also advised that it was planned that a report on the provision of a new online calendar system would be brought to Committee at its meeting in June 2025 for consideration.

The Vice Chairperson expressed thanks to the Head of Service for his efforts in relation to the above matters and also in regard to his prompt reply to a resident who had reported an issue regarding a bulky waste collection recently.

## 5.3 Most Up-to-date Information on the Stray Dog Case Alderman S Skillen

Alderman S Skillen advised that whilst she was aware of the recent update that been provided to Members on the stray dog case and that she was also aware of the information provided on this matter in the FAQ section on the Council's website, enquired as to what Members can say publicly as she had received a number of enquiries from constituents recently.

The Acting Director of Environmental Services confirmed that the communication that he had issued to Members the previous week was the most up-to-date information. He also affirmed that the FAQ section on the Council's website contained the most up-to-date information and gave an assurance that he would communicate further with Members once more information was known.

## 5.4 Bulky Waste Collection Issues Councillor C McCready

At the outset Councillor C McCready expressed concern in regard to the lack of business at Committee meetings and recalled that when he was first elected to Council there was three or four times as many report items being presented at Committee meetings.

Councillor C McCready put on record his thanks to the Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services) for his help recently regarding a problem experienced by a constituent when trying to make a phone call to this council in

#### 5.4 Bulky Waste Collection Issues (Cont'd)

connection with a request for bulky waste collections. Councillor McCready also advised that the same constituent had gone online to submit a request for bulky collections but had been disappointed when they received an automated response advising the items in question could not be lifted. The constituent then tried submitting individual requests for each item but each request was denied. Councillor McCready felt that in such circumstances it would be more appropriate if a phone call be made to the constituent explaining why certain items cannot be lifted. He felt that an improved process would be more helpful to constituents.

In response Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services) advised that a report outlining proposals for a much more developed system to manage waste would be presented to the Committee next month. He explained that the aim of the proposed new system was to enhance customer experience in different ways, namely; a section on education, an improved interface, an app called Digital Depot for the booking of bulky collections and also providing information on collections over holiday periods.

The Head of Service acknowledged the difficulties and frustration experienced by the constituent in trying to arrange collection of bulky waste and assured Councillor McCready that he had taken note of the issues raised. He also provided a comprehensive response to further comments from Councillor McCready in regard to bulky waste collection timescales generally and also in regard to the management of the backlog of requests for bulky waste collections that tend to accumulate following holiday periods.

Councillor C McCready, having thanked the Head of Service for his explanation, commended the efforts of the waste collection team and asked the Head of Service convey his thanks and appreciation to the team.

#### 5.5 Lack of Business for Consideration Vice Chairperson, Councillor G Hynds

Further comments were raised by the Vice Chairperson, Councillor G Hynds, in regard to the lack of business on the agenda for recent Committee meetings. The Vice Chairperson asked the Acting Director of Environmental Services to take on board the concerns raised by both himself and Councillor C McCready earlier in the meeting regarding the lack of business on the agenda for recent committee meetings and to provide an explanation as to why the agenda items were so few.

In response the Acting Director referred to the Terms of Reference for each Committee which prescribes the business for each Committee. The Acting Director also discussed examples of items of business that are now considered at other Committees, such as performance and capital projects. The Acting Director suggested that if Members feel that any of the Terms of Reference for the various Committee need to change they should feed this back to the Management team for review.

The Vice Chairperson expressed concern that perhaps too much business was being delegated to Officers and, as a collective, Directors have to take these comments on board.

6. Confidential Report of the Acting Director of Environmental Services  
(Item 5 on the agenda refers)

The Vice Chairperson, Councillor G Hynds, advised that the confidential report items 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 Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor C McCreedy, and agreed that the following matters be considered "in Committee," in the absence of members of the press and public being present.

Members of the press and public seated in the public gallery left the Council Chamber (6.29 pm).

6.1 Cemetery Provision Update  
(Report not for publication)

The Acting Director of Environmental Services responded to questions from the Committee arising from the report and also noted a number of comments raised.

Following discussion it was agreed that the update report in relation to short and long term Cemetery provision be noted. It was noted that a further report would come to the Committee in due course in relation to the administration of burial plots.

Councillor N Parker and Alderman J Baird left the meeting during consideration of this item (6.49 pm and 6.55 pm respectively).

6.2 Procurement of Waste Transfer, Bulking and Haulage of Residual Waste  
(Redacted report to be published 01 July 2025 following contract commencement)

The Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services presented this item of business.

It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Councillor C McCreedy, and agreed to recommend that the recommendations as outlined in the report, including the appended tender report, in relation to the award for waste transfer, bulking and haulage of residual waste be approved.

7. Any Other Business (Confidential)

7.1 Parking Attendant Issue  
Alderman A McIntyre

The Acting Director of Environmental Services responded to an issue raised by Alderman A McIntyre involving a parking attendant and a member of the public, and undertook to follow up on this issue with Alderman McIntyre directly.

7.2 Animal Welfare Issue  
Vice Chairperson, Councillor G Hynds

The Acting Director of Environmental Services responded to an issue raised by the Vice Chairperson in connection with an animal welfare issue, and undertook to have one of his Officers look into this matter.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor C McCready, seconded by Councillor M McKeever, and agreed to come out of Committee and normal business was resumed.

The Vice Chairperson, Councillor G Hynds, thanked those present for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.10 pm.

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Vice Chairperson