

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held in the Council Chamber and Remote Locations on Thursday, 11 June, 2026 at 6:00 pm

PRESENT IN CHAMBER:

Councillor M McKeever (Chair)
Mr E Jardine (Independent Member and Vice-Chair)
Aldermen O Gawith, and J Tinsley
Councillors J Bamford, A P Ewing, A Martin and R McLernon

PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:

Alderman S P Porter
Councillors D Bassett, S Burns, J Gallen and B Magee

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive
Director of Organisation Development and Innovation
Director of Finance & Corporate Services
Head of Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning
Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development
Head of Parks & Amenities (Acting)
Internal Audit Manager (remote)
Performance Improvement Officer
Member Services Manager
Member Services Officer
IT Officer

Northern Ireland Audit Office

Mr R McCance (Remote)

RBCA

Mr B Stewart (Remote)

Commencement of the Meeting

The Chair, Councillor M McKeever, having welcomed those present to the June meeting of the Governance & Audit Committee, 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 Chair 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.

The Chair asked that mobile phones be put on silent or switched off for the duration of the meeting following which the Director of Organisation Development & 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 Alderman A Grehan and Councillors D J Craig and D Lynch.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest declared at the meeting.

3 Report from the Director of Organisation Development and Innovation

3.1 Key Departmental Objectives 26/27

Alderman J Tinsley and Councillor A P Ewing arrived to the meeting during this item (6.04 pm).

The Director of Organisation Development and Innovation presented the report and advised that its intention was to highlight key objectives for the year ahead which were considered 'non business as usual' in type. Members noted the Key Departmental Objectives for the coming year.

4. Report from the Performance Improvement Officer

4.1 Customer Care Feedback – Quarter 4 2025/26

In addition to the narrative report Members were provided with a copy of a dashboard report showing compliments and complaints during Quarter 4 of 2025/26. The Performance Improvement Officer outlined in her report a summary of key learning outcomes from complaints, as well as good practice noted from compliments received.

Councillor J Bamford thanked the Performance Improvement Officer for her expansion of the report to include examples of compliments and complaints and learnings, which had previously been requested by Members. It was agreed by Members that the contents of the report be noted.

4.2 Q4 Performance Improvement Monitoring – Objectives, Case Studies, Performance KPIs & Corporate Plan KPIs

Members were provided with a copy of:

- (a) a quarterly monitoring document, including case studies of improvement for Quarter 4 of 2025/26 (January – March inclusive);
- (b) details of Performance KPI results for Quarter 4 of 2025/26 which showed the progress of each KPI across the year;

4.2 Q4 Performance Improvement Monitoring – Objectives, Case Studies, Performance KPIs & Corporate Plan KPIs (Cont'd)

- (c) an overall summary of Performance KPI results for Quarter 4 of 2025/26; and
- (d) details of Corporate Plan KPI results for Quarter 4 of 2025/26.

The Performance Improvement Officer presented the report and drew Members attention to KPI 254 'Inclusivity Delivery of specialist employability support and advice for those with a disability'. At a pre-briefing with the Chair, Councillor M McKeever, it had been queried how many people had gained employment as a result of this service. The Performance Improvement Officer advised she was pleased to be able to say 28 people progressed to employment or further education as a result of the programmes.

The Performance Improvement Officer responded to a query from a Member and Members agreed to note the contents of the report.

4.3 Consultation Report on the Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2026/2027

The Performance Improvement Officer presented the report advising Members that in addition to the online consultation, 3 focus groups had been held across the Council area, with sign language interpreters at 2 of the 3 focus groups. There was also provision of the consultation in an Easy Read format to improve inclusivity. An increase in engagement was noted in comparison to the previous year.

The Performance Improvement Officer responded to questions from the Vice-Chair, Mr E Jardine, and Members. Councillor B Magee welcomed the addition of the Easy Read format of the consultation.

It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Councillor B Magee and agreed to recommend that the Consultation Report on the Performance Improvement Objectives 2026/27 be approved.

4.4 Performance Monitoring KPI Setting 26/27

The Performance Improvement Officer presented the report and advised a digital version of the Performance Improvement Plan had also been developed to meet the UK Government accessibility regulations. She expanded on KPI's 38 and 262 following queries at the pre-briefing stating:

- KPI 38 'Number of new jobs linked to economic development programmes' would be reported on both a cumulative target and distinct target for the quarter; and
- As targets for KPI 262 'Number of Health & Wellbeing Programmes' had been overachieved in the past year it had been suggested targets could

4.4 Performance Monitoring KPI Setting 26/27 (Cont'd)

be revised. The Performance Improvement Officer informed Members that this had taken place this week and as such was not completed in time for inclusion in the papers which had been issued to Members. The new cumulative targets for KPI 262 had been revised to:

- (a) Quarter 1: 1000
- (b) Quarter 2: 1600
- (c) Quarter 3: 2600
- (d) Quarter 4: 3600

At the request of the Vice-Chair, Mr E Jardine, the Performance Improvement Officer agreed to provide detail in form of a narrative in relation to KPI 228 'Capital Programme Expenditure measured against Budget' in future reports. The detail would give information indicating the difference in expenditure and committed funds.

It was proposed by Councillor A P Ewing, seconded by Councillor J Gallen and agreed to recommend that the Performance Monitoring KPI's for 2026/27 be approved and set as outlined in the report.

The Chair, Councillor M McKeever advised that this was the last meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee the Performance Improvement Officer would be attending and thanked her for her work and attendance over the years.

5. Report by Head of Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning

5.1 Corporate Risk Register

Members were provided with copies of the Corporate and Departmental Risk Registers.

The Head of Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning presented the report and advised Members that all risks have clearly assigned ownership and established mitigation measures.

Officers responded to queries from Members.

Members agreed that the report on the Corporate and Departmental Risk Registers be noted.

6. Report by the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

6.1 Code of Audit Practice (Local Government) 2026

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented the report which had been furnished to Members and advised that the Code of Audit Practice had been approved by the Northern Ireland Assembly and has been in effect since 15 April, 2026.

6.1 Code of Audit Practice (Local Government) 2026 (Cont'd)

Mr R McCance responded to a question from a Member.

Members agreed to note the NIAO Code of Audit Practice.

7. Report of the Internal Audit Manager

7.1 Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy Statement and Strategy

The Internal Audit Manager advised Members that bribery had been added to the refreshed policy as the Council did not have a separate Anti-Bribery Policy.

It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Councillor A P Ewing and agreed to recommend that the amended Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy Statement and Strategy be approved.

7.2 Raising Concerns Policy

The Internal Audit Manager advised Members that the policy was formerly known as the Whistleblowing Policy and that it had been reviewed following guidance received from the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

It was proposed by Councillor J Gallen, seconded by Councillor A P Ewing and agreed to recommend that the amended Raising Concerns Policy be approved.

8. Any Other Business

At this stage in the meeting, the Chair, Councillor M McKeever asked if there was any other business of a non-confidential nature to discuss, however there was no other business to discuss.

Alderman S P Porter, the Head of Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning, Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development, Head of Parks & Amenities (Acting) and the Performance Improvement Officer left the meeting at this stage (6.40 pm).

9. 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).

Item 9.2.1 was also confidential due to containing information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

“In Committee”

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

9.1 Confidential Report by the Internal Audit Manager

9.1.1 Internal Audit Annual Report

(Report will be made available following Council ratification)

The Internal Audit Manager elaborated on the report which had been furnished to Members prior to the meeting and responded to queries from Members.

It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Alderman O Gawith and agreed to recommend that the Internal Audit Annual Report be approved.

9.1.2 Internal Audit Progress Report

(Report will be made available following Council ratification)

The Internal Audit Manager presented the report and Members agreed to note its contents.

9.1.3 Internal Audit – GIAS Gap Analysis Action Plan

(Report will be made available following Council ratification)

Councillor S Burns left the meeting and Alderman S P Porter returned to the meeting during this item (6.45pm).

Members noted the contents of the report as presented by the Internal Audit Manager which was an action plan resulting from a report brought before the committee in March 2026.

9.1.4 G&A Self Evaluation Questionnaire

(Report will never be published)

Members agreed to recommend that the G&A Self Evaluation Questionnaire be approved.

9.1.5 CE Statement of Assurance – October 2025 – March 2026

(Report will never be published)

The Internal Audit Manager presented the report and Members agreed to note its contents.

9.2 Confidential Report by the Director of Organisation Development and Innovation

9.2.1 Ofcom correspondence

(Redacted report will be made available following Council ratification)

Councillor J Bamford left the meeting during this item (6.55 pm)

The Director of Organisation Development and Innovation elaborated on the report and responded to questions from Members. She undertook to raise how the contents of the correspondence could affect local businesses with the Council's Economic Development Unit and ascertain how many times correspondence of this nature is issued by Ofcom per year. Members noted the correspondence from Ofcom and subsequent action required by the Council as recommended in the report from the Director.

At this stage in the meeting, the Chair, Councillor M McKeever, asked if Members had any confidential items of Any Other Business to raise, which they did not.

9.3 Confidential Report by the Chief Executive

9.3.1 Finance & Legal Support

(Report never to be published)

Before the Chief Executive presented this report the Member Services Manager and Member Services Officer were asked to leave the room due to the confidential nature of its contents. Councillor J Bamford returned to the meeting at this time (6.57 pm).

Members considered the contents of and noted the report from the Chief Executive.

The Member Services Manager and Member Services Officer returned to the meeting following the conclusion of this item. (7.13 pm)

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor A P Ewing, seconded by Alderman J Tinsley, and agreed to come out of committee and normal business was resumed.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.15 pm.

Mayor/Chairperson