

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of the Regeneration & Growth Committee held in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn and in remote locations on Thursday, 4 December 2025 at 5.30 pm

PRESENT IN
THE CHAMBER:

Councillor C Kemp (Chairperson)

Councillor J Harpur (Vice Chairperson)

Aldermen J Baird, A G Ewart MBE and A McIntyre

Councillors A Gowan, U Mackin, A Martin, T Mitchell and C McCready

PRESENT REMOTELY: The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman A Grehan
Councillors K Dickson and J Laverty BEM

IN ATTENDANCE

Director of Regeneration & Growth
Head of Assets
Head of Planning & Capital Development
Regeneration & Infrastructure Manager
Programmes Manager
Member Services Manager (Acting)
Member Services Officer
IT Officer

Commencement of Meeting

The Chairperson, Councillor C Kemp, extended a welcome to everyone in attendance at the December meeting of the Regeneration & Growth Committee.

The Chairperson reminded those present that the meeting was being audio recorded unless the item was being considered under confidential business. The Chairperson also outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. Apologies

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance on behalf of the Deputy Mayor, Alderman H Legge, Alderman M Gregg, and Councillors J Gallen and D Lynch.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

3. Report of Head of Economic Development

3.1 LCCC Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Action Plan Update

In the absence of the Head of Economic Development, the Director of Regeneration & Growth presented this item of business.

The Head of Economic Development's report highlighted the background and key issues in connection with an update on the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Action Plan. The Officer's report set out various outputs of the Labour Market Partnership Action Plan in terms of numbers of participants.

The Committee had been furnished with a number of related documents in connection with the Council's LMP, including

- LCCCs Labour Market Partnership Annual Report April 2024-March 2025
- the final report on the 2024/2025 Labour Market Partnership Action Plan
- an evaluation paper on the LMP delivered by EPIC Futures NI, an independent partnership led by the University of Ulster.

It was noted from the report that the LMP Draft Action Plan had been presented to the Regional Labour Market Partnership for Northern Ireland on 23 October 2024, the purpose of which had been to secure funding from the DfC for the 2025/2026 and 2026/2027 financial years. The Action Plan, which included match funding from the Council of £130k had been approved by the Regeneration and Growth Committee in March 2025 and a Letter of Offer had been received and signed on 22 May 2025.

The Director reported that further to the Letter of Offer for funding provided to the Council in May 2025, the Council had received an addendum to the Letter of Offer to allow the proposed LMP Action Plan 2025/2026 to be funded in full which would result in an additional funding allocation of £98,695.36 to expand the delivery of the current Action Plan 2025/2026 in line with the previously agreed themes.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman A Grehan, joined the meeting remotely at 5.33 pm.

It was proposed by the Vice-Chairperson, Councillor J Harpur, seconded by Alderman J Biard and agreed to recommend that:

3.2 LCCC Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Action Plan Update (Cont'd)

- a) the updated Action Plan 2025/26 be agreed
- b) the addendum received to the current Letter of Offer for the LMP Action Plan 2025/2026 be agreed, and
- c) any additional funding secured through further underspend bids, which would be allocated to projects within the agreed themes of the Action Plan and according to local labour market needs, be accepted.

The Programmes Manager left the meeting at 5.34 pm.

4.0 Report of Head of Assets

4.1 Brooklands Gospel Centre

The Head of Assets' report highlighted the background and key issues in connection with the lease agreement for Brooklands Gospel Centre in Ballybeen, Dundonald.

It was noted that the site for the original Gospel Hall had been granted to the Trustees from NI Housing Executive and the building then had been extended with the benefit of additional land granted from Castlereagh Borough Council by way of a lease for 99 years dated 24th August 1981. The car park had been extended by way of a second lease from the Council for 69 years from 1 July 2010.

Copies of the above-mentioned leases had been appended to the Officer's report together with a copy of the site map.

The Head of Assets advised that correspondence had been received from the tenant's solicitor with a request to assign both leasehold interests from The Trustees of Brooklands Gospel Centre to The Brooklands Gospel Centre Trust. It was noted that under the terms of the leases, Council consent was required for the proposed assignment.

The Head of Assets clarified an issue raised by a Member in connection with resource and financial implications for the Council as a result of the above assignment. It was noted that the Brooklands Gospel Centre Trust had agreed to meet the Council's costs where appropriate.

It was proposed by Alderman A G Ewart, seconded by Alderman A McIntyre, and agreed to recommend that the request for the assignment from The Trustees of Brooklands Gospel Centre to The Brooklands Gospel Centre Trust be agreed and that the leases being amended accordingly, subject to due diligence.

4.2 Draft Land and Property Asset Management Strategy (LPAMS)

The Head of Asset's report outlined the background and key considerations in connection with the draft Land and Property Asset Management Strategy (LPAMS).

The Committee had been furnished with a draft Land and Property Asset Management Strategy (LPAMS) for consideration ahead of a consultation process, together with the following documents:

- a) a report on buildings insurable replacement value of each of the assets. It was noted that the stock of buildings and structures ranged in age as well as condition depending on use, environment and previous investment.
- b) an asset management plan programme. It was noted that this programme would not form part of the consultation and would need to be informed and populated in line with a series of condition reports that have and are being commissioned, and
- c) an extract from the Council's capital programme.

A number of key issues outlined in the report included:

- Officers' continued engagement with SIB Estates Group,
- the consultation that would take place on the draft LPAMS and also in relation to the timeframes that would link in with the Council's structures,
- 38 planned preventative maintenance contracts being managed by the Estates team,
- an annual repairs and renewals budget allocation for non-recurring expenditure so as to enhance and repair key assets, and
- the draft LPAMS provided for further acquisitions to landbank important community, sports, economic stimulus and regenerative sites to meet corporate and community planning objectives.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth and the Head of Assets responded to questions and concerns from a Member who was of the opinion that the Strategy failed to include some key information which had been requested previously on the current condition and state of the buildings within the Council's property portfolio, as well as information on the cost of maintaining the assets long term. The Member stated that such information was required to allow an informed position during the rate setting process. The Member also requested clarification on the timelines in regard to planned capital expenditure across the estate within the current capital programme and also in relation to risk management and compliance.

In response to the above comments, the Director of Regeneration & Growth stated that the Council was not structured to deliver out on a number of areas in the short term and that it was intended that a further report on issues raised would come forward in due course. The Director discussed the condition surveys that were being commissioned currently and also provided assurances on the issue of risk management and compliance.

4.2 Draft Land and Property Asset Management Strategy (LPAMS) (Cont'd)

The Head of Assets clarified that the timelines in the draft strategy were worst case scenarios and advised that compliance was ongoing, there being various levels of scrutiny across the Estate.

Councillor K Dickson, who had raised these issues at the outset, thanked the Director and the Head of Assets for their responses. Councillor Dickson acknowledged that some good work had taken place in progressing the DLAPMS, however, he wished to put on record that he, along with his Alliance party colleagues were uncomfortable with the progress on the draft strategy. He stated that the Alliance party had requested last year that this area of work be progressed in order to make an informed decision during the rate setting process.

The Head of Assets and the Director responded to a question from another Member in relation to the net value of the Council's entire estate. The Director elaborated on the net book value of the estate. In response to another question the Director elaborated on planned expenditure on capital investments over the next three years.

Councillor A Gowan left the meeting at 5.55 pm.

It was proposed by Councillor U Mackin, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend agree that:

- a) the draft Land & Property Asset Management Strategy, as circulated, be agreed, and
- b) the consultation of the draft Strategy as presented, be progressed with feedback and any amendments to the Strategy to be reported to a future Committee for consideration.

5.0 Report of Head of Planning & Capital Development

5.1 Consultation from DfI Planning on the Review of Planning Fees

The Head of Planning & Capital Development's report outlined the background and key issues in connection with a consultation by the the Department for Infrastructure on a review of Planning Fees in relation to non-material changes and discharge of conditions. The proposed fee for both types of planning applications was £115 for both types of planning applications.

A copy of the correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure on the above-mentioned consultation had been appended to the Officer's report.

5.1 Consultation from DfI Planning on the Review of Planning Fees (Cont'd)

The Head of Planning & Capital Development expressed disappointment that there was a number of fixed questions to this consultation which provided little opportunity to make further comments.

In response to questions from the Committee the Head of Planning & Capital Development provided clarification in relation to Planning Advice Notices and also in relation to the number of pre-application discussions that the Planning Unit would undertake each year.

At the request of a Member the Head of Planning & Capital Development undertook to amend the response at question no. 6 to include the undernoted additional comments:

- a) Pre-application discussion would be required on a statutory basis for major applications only, and not local applications, and
- b) Tree Preservation Orders should not be charged for.

It was proposed by Alderman A McIntyre, seconded by Councillor U Mackin, and agreed to recommend that:

- a) the content of the draft responses on the consultation by DfI Planning be agreed subject to the amendments to the response at question no. 6, as outlined above, and
- b) delegated authority be granted to officers to make a submission to this consultation before 23 December 2025.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Carryduff Household Re-Cycling Centre (HRC) Site Vice Chairperson, Councillor J Harpur

The Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to comments and questions from the Vice Chairperson, Councillor J Harpur, in regard to the Carryduff HRC Site. The Vice Chairperson advised that he had attended the public consultation meeting earlier that day at which the question had been raised regarding the pedestrian access being included in the public realm scheme.

In response, the Director stated that the Carryduff HRC had been considered at the Environment & Sustainability Committee meeting the previous evening and had been well received. The Director also advised that the consultation had been very positive in relation to the interdependency works within the public realm. He discussed the importance of understanding the interdependencies not only in respect of the HRC but also other developments that would tie in with this project. The Director also advised on the

6.1 Carryduff Household Re-Cycling Centre (HRC) Site (Cont'd)
Vice Chairperson, Councillor J Harpur

discussions he had had with Translink about future proofing the public realm to accommodate the Rapid Transit System or at the very least an increase in bus services.

The Director gave an assurance that Officers continued to engage with both the Elected Member Forum and the Regeneration Forum in regard to the public realm works.

6.2 Carryduff Greenway – Request for Update
Vice Chairperson, Councillor J Harpur

The Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to comments from the Vice Chairperson, Councillor J Harpur, in regard to his request for an update on the Carryduff Greenway project in view of a recent meeting with elected representatives having been postponed recently. The Director informed the Vice Chairperson that the Carryduff Greenway project was not on the Council's Capital programme currently. The Director indicated that this project had been competing with other high priority projects in his DEA such as the redevelopment of the Lough Moss facility and also the HRC project, having come forward in line with statutory obligations and funding, and therefore had taken precedence.

The Director also reminded Members that agreement had been received through the Regeneration & Growth Committee to develop an investment framework for sustainable transport and blue greenways. Whilst this initiative would be influenced by Departmental funding, the aim was to bring forward a key set of recommendations to this Committee on what the Committee's priorities are. The Director reiterated that whilst the Carryduff Greenway project was currently in the mix it was not in the Capital Programme.

In response to further comments from the Vice Chairperson, the Director undertook to raise the issue of the meeting with the Carryduff Greenway Working Group being rescheduled in January 2026 with his Director colleague.

6.3 Christmas Market Dundonald
Councillor J Laverty

The Director responded to comments and concerns from Councillor J Laverty in connection with the date of the Dundonald Christmas Market coinciding with the date of the December Regeneration & Growth Committee meeting for the second year. Councillor Laverty expressed disappointment that he had no time to engage with the market traders as he had to return home to join the Committee meeting, and sought assurances that this clash of dates would not happen again

6.3 Christmas Market Dundonald (Cont'd)
Councillor J Laverty

The Director apologised to Councillor Laverty and the Castlereagh East DEA Members for this clash of dates which he confirmed he would look at going forward.

6.4 Re-Surfacing in Royal Hillsborough - Update
Councillor C McCready

Councillor C McCready having welcomed the resurfacing planned for Royal Hillsborough and having expressed thanks to the Director of Regeneration & Growth and his team for their efforts, requested a further update on the Royal Hillsborough Public Realm Scheme.

The Director advised that it was anticipated that a planning application was anticipated to come before the Planning Committee in January 2026. He referred to a series of statutory obligations to be negotiated and resolved, as was the case in all planning applications. However as this application was a heritage asset there were a number of competing needs that had to be addressed in respect of traffic, pedestrians and the need to retain the heritage theme.

The Director welcomed that an addendum to the business case had been submitted to the Programme Board. He advised that the project was on track and would be out to tender for those works in the course of the New Year.

6.5 Free Car Parking in City Centre during Saturdays in December and January
Councillor C McCready

Councillor C McCready referred to the Council's provision of free car parking in Council-owned car parks during Saturdays in December and January and enquired about the gathering of data in respect of this free car parking in order to see how this initiative helps local businesses. Councillor McCready also referred to the Department for Infrastructure's one hour free on-street parking for the Christmas period and asked how that was being tracked. Councillor McCready requested that a report on such data be presented to the Regeneration & Growth Committee in February 2026 which, he stated, would allow for a better feel for the portfolio for the Car Parking Strategy in future years.

The Director assured Councillor McCready that data was being tracked for car parking and also in regard to the patrons' perceptions of the City Centre offering. He advised that the Council was not in control of the data for the on-Street car parking offering but would endeavour to seek that information for the Committee's consideration.

6.6 Lisburn Twilight Market - Postponed
Director of Regeneration & Growth

The Director of Regeneration & Growth updated the Committee in regard to the Lisburn Twilight Market which, due to the forecasted high winds the following evening, 5 December, had to be postponed.

The Director also welcomed the success to date of the Lisburn Light Show, the attendance at which, according to current figures, was up by 30%.

7. Confidential Report from Director of Regeneration & Growth

The Chairperson, Councillor C Kemp, advised that confidential reports were required to be considered under confidential business 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 T Mitchell, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed that the Confidential Reports be considered “in Committee” in the absence of press or members of the public. The audio recording was paused at this stage in proceedings.

Alderman A G Ewart left the meeting at 6.28 pm.

7.1 Estimates 2026/2027 Directorate Update
(Report not for Publication as final Estimates are published)

This report was presented by the Director of Regeneration & Growth who, together with the Head of Planning & Capital Development, responded to questions from the Committee.

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of the current year to date budget position for the Regeneration & Growth Directorate together with the current proposed budgets for 2026-2027.

Alderman A G Ewart returned to the meeting at 6.31 pm.

It was agreed that the Director’s update report on the Regeneration & Growth’s budget estimates 2026/2027 be noted.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman A Grehan, left the meeting at 6.33 pm.

7.2 Refurbishment of the Light Floor in Lisburn City Centre
(Redacted report to be published following ratification by Council)

This report was presented by the Director of Regeneration & Growth.

A copy of design options provided by the consultants had been appended to the Director's report.

It was proposed by Councillor U Mackin, seconded by Councillor T Mitchell, and agreed to recommend that the option for the replacement light floor in Lisburn City Centre, as outlined in the report, be agreed, it being noted that further reports on the operation of the light floor be brought to a future Committee meeting for approval.

The Regeneration & Infrastructure Manager left the meeting at 6.47 pm.

7.3 Capital Plan Project 56.0: LVI Roof Repairs and M&E Upgrade Project
(Redacted report only to be published following ratification by Council)

This report was presented by the Director of Regeneration & Growth.

The Committee had been furnished with copies of a cost report and a financial summary document in respect of the above Capital Plan Project.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor U Mackin, and agreed to recommend that the Council proceeds with the design elements of the above project, as outlined under the RIBA Plan of Work, which included a break clause at tender stage, so as to inform a business case for all elements to be brought back to Committee for consideration.

7.4 Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) & Reactive Maintenance (RM) - Tender Evaluation Criteria
(Redacted report to be published post award of tender – March 2026)

This report was presented by the Head of Assets.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by the Vice Chairperson, Councillor J Harpur, and agreed to recommend that the tender evaluation award criteria in respect of Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) & Reactive Maintenance (RM). as outlined in the report, be agreed.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by the Vice Chairperson, Councillor J Harpur, seconded by Alderman A McIntyre, and agreed to come out of Committee and normal business was resumed.

Conclusion of Meeting

The Chairperson thanked everyone for their attendance and wished everyone a Merry Christmas. There being no further business for consideration the meeting was concluded at 6.52 pm.

Chairperson