

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 5 December 2024 at 5.32 pm****PRESENT IN
THE CHAMBER:**

Alderman A Grehan (Chairperson)

Alderman A G Ewart MBE (Vice Chairperson)

Alderman J Baird

Councillors A Gowan, C Kemp, J Lavery BEM, U Mackin,
A Martin, T Mitchell, C McCready, and N Parker**REMOTE
ATTENDANCE:**Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin
Councillors J Harpur and D Lynch**OTHER MEMBERS:**

Councillor G Hynds (Chamber)

IN ATTENDANCEDirector of Regeneration & Growth
Head of Economic Development
Head of Planning & Capital Development
Head of Assets
Member Services Officers (CH and CR)
IT Officer**Commencement of Meeting**

The Chairperson, Alderman A Grehan, 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. The Chair stated that unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per the Council's Standing Orders. The Chair 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 Chairperson asked that 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.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth 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 Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson together with Alderman M Gregg and Councillor J Gallen.

2. Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared during the meeting:

- Councillor J Lavery declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of item 3.1 'DfE Sub Regional Plan – LEP Guidance and Initial Proposals' in view of his membership of the board of Inspire Business Centre;
- Councillor A Gowan declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of item 4.3 'Request to Acquire Property Holding' in view of his membership of Anahilt Primary School Board of Governors.

3. Report of Head of Economic Development

3.1 Department for the Economy (DfE) Sub Regional Plan – Local Economic Partnership guidance and initial proposals

Councillor G Hynds entered the meeting during the Officers report (5.37 pm).
Councillor A Gowan entered the meeting during discussion of this item (5.51 pm).

Further to the report presented to the Committee in November 2024, the Head of Economic Development provided an update on the background and key issues in connection with the New Sub-Regional Economic Plan. Members noted that DfE had issued initial guidance and a proposed timetable on the establishment of Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs).

It was reported that the Council and the LEP were required to agree Terms of Reference, the core economic focus of its proposed 2026-27 programme of activity, and how to decide and assess the proposed projects and actions within the proposed programme. It was further reported that the projects and actions were to be assessed by 31 March 2025, based on the methodology agreed by the LEP.

The following documents had been appended to the Officer's report:

- DfE LEPs Draft Guidance
- DfE LEP Set-up timeline
- Draft Lisburn Castlereagh LEP terms of reference

3.1 Department for the Economy (DfE) Sub Regional Plan – Local Economic Partnership guidance and initial proposals (Cont'd)

The Director of Regeneration & Growth and the Head of Economic Development responded to a number of questions from the Committee in connection with the report, particularly in relation to the proposed Lisburn and Castlereagh LEP membership structure, which had been developed in line with LEP membership guidance received by DfE. A number of Members raised concern that no democratic membership was recommended in the LEP membership structure.

Further to discussion, it was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor U Mackin, and agreed to recommend that:

- a) the initial proposed membership structure of the LEP as detailed in the report be approved, with the addition of three Elected Members to be appointed by D'Hondt, and officers to establish the LEP accordingly,
- b) the draft Terms of Reference for the LEP be approved; and
- c) further update reports be presented to the Committee as the initiative progresses and further guidance is received.

The Chair, Alderman A Grehan, advised that Any Other Business would be considered at this point in the meeting.

4. Any Other Business (Agenda Item 5.0 refers)

4.1 Christmas Programme Councillor J Lavery

Councillor J Lavery request that when planning for future Christmas Programmes, the dates of Committee meetings be considered to ensure members could attend Christmas activities across the Council area. It was noted that the Dundonald Christmas market, which had been cancelled due to the ongoing weather warning, had been due to be held that evening and a number of Elected Members would have liked to attend, however it clashed with the Regeneration and Growth Committee.

The Director of Regeneration and Growth noted the concerns raised and explained the challenges Officers faced with programming, due to the large amount of Christmas activities planned alongside the availability of traders. The Committee noted that the Dundonald Christmas Market had been rescheduled to the 19 December 2024. Members also noted that an amber weather warning had been issued for the coming days, which would have further impact on Christmas activities.

5. Confidential Report from Director of Regeneration & Growth (Agenda Item 4.0 refers)

The Chairperson, Alderman A Grehan, advised that confidential report items 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), and information relating to any consultations or negotiations, in connections with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a Government Department and employees of, or office holders under, the Council.

In Committee

It was proposed by Councillor C McCready, seconded by Councillor C Kemp, 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.

The member of the press seated in the public gallery left the Council Chamber (6.05 pm).

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin joined the meeting remotely (6.05 pm).

5.1 Estimates Process – Directorate Update

(Report will never be made available, final estimates will be released)

Councillor A Martin left the meeting (6.15 pm).

The Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to a number of questions from the Committee arising from the report. Members raised concerns with the layout and format of the report as presented, making it impossible for Members to scrutinise. Further to discussion the Committee agreed to recommend that:

- a) the progress on estimates for 2025/2026 be noted; and
- b) a further report be presented to the Committee in January 2025, in the same format as the previous year.

5.2 Business Cases for European Trade Programme and ROI Trade Programme

(Redacted report to be published March 2025, appendices will never be published)

Vice-Chairperson, Alderman A Ewart left the meeting (6.22 pm).

The report was presented by the Head of Service for Economic Development. It was proposed by Councillor N Parker, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that the two business cases as outlined in the report be approved, and procurement of a suitable provider(s) be approved as follows:

- a) European Trade Programme: A one-year contract for the planning and delivery of the single trade programme in 2025; and

5.2 Business Cases for European Trade Programme and ROI Trade Programme Cont'd

- b) ROI Trade Missions: A three-year contract (2024-27) for the planning and delivery of two trade missions annually, resulting in six missions over the duration of the programme.

5.3 Request to Acquire Property Holding

(Redacted Report to be published on assessment completion, appendix 3d will never be published)

The Vice-Chairperson, Alderman A Ewart returned to the meeting (6.29 pm).

Following discussion, it was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor U Mackin, and agreed to recommend that a report be approved to be presented to Committee in due course, in the context of a Council wide understanding of capital programme pressures and acquisition requests for community facilities.

6. Any Other Confidential Business

**6.1 Belfast City Regional Deal - Hillsborough
Councillor J Lavery**

At the request of Councillor J Lavery, the Director provided an update to the Committee on progress made to date in relation to the above matter.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor T Mitchell, seconded by Vice-Chairperson, Alderman A Ewart, and agreed to come out of Committee and normal business was resumed.

7. Additional Any Other Business

7.1 January 2025 Meeting of Regeneration & Growth Committee

It was proposed by Vice-Chairperson Alderman A Ewart, seconded by Councillor C Kemp, and agreed that the January 2025 meeting of the Regeneration and Growth Committee be rescheduled to take place on Monday 13 January 2025.

Conclusion of Meeting

The Chairperson thanked Directors and Officers for their work over the last year and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

There being no further business for consideration the meeting was concluded at 6.34 pm.

Chairperson