

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held remotely and in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn on Wednesday 11th September 2024 at 6.00 pm.

**PRESENT IN
COUNCIL CHAMBER
(COMMITTEE):**

Councillor The Hon N Trimble (Chair)

Councillor N Eaton (Vice-Chair)

Aldermen A Ewart MBE, M Gregg, A Grehan and H Legge

Councillors P Burke, A Ewing, A Givan, J Harpur, B Higginson, C Kemp, J Lavery BEM, and G McCleave

**OTHER MEMBERS
OF COUNCIL
PRESENT IN
COUNCIL CHAMBER**

Councillor G Hynds

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive (Remote)

Director of Finance & Corporate Services

Director of Organisation Development & Innovation

Director of Regeneration & Growth

Director of Environmental Services (Acting)

Head of Assets

Head of Communities

Head of Corporate Communications & Administration

Head of Economic Development

Head of Finance

Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development

Head of Planning & Capital Development

Capital Programme Manager (Acting)

Capital Accountant

Member Services Officers (RN & EW)

Commencement of Meeting

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting, in particular Councillor Jamie Harpur who had replaced Michelle Guy on the Council upon her membership of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The Chair reminded Members that attendance at meetings could now be on a remote basis as well as in person. The names of those Elected Members who were in attendance at the meeting, both in person and on a remote basis, were read out by the Member Services Officer.

The meeting would be audio recorded unless the item on the agenda was to be considered under confidential business. Unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per 8.5 of the Council's Standing Orders. Mobile phones were to be turned off or on silent mode for the duration of the meeting.

The Director of Finance & Corporate Services outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

Finally, the Chair asked that any Member entering or leaving the meeting alert the Member Services Officer accordingly so that this might be accurately reflected in the minutes.

1. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor K Dickson; the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin; and Councillor T Beckett.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chair invited Members to declare any interests they might have in relation to the business of the meeting and reminded them of the requirement that they complete Declaration of Interest forms in this regard which had been provided with the papers for the meeting and which were also available in the Chamber.

The following Declaration of Interest was made during the course of the meeting:-

- Councillor A Ewing – Item 7.3 of Confidential Report – “Capital Programme Movements - Item re Wallace Park Tennis Development”. (Member of Wallace Park Tennis Courts)

3. Report of Director of Finance & Corporate Services

3.1 Government Budget Consultations

The Head of Communities and the Head of Planning and Capital Development were present and available to answer questions on the responses to the Department of Health and the Department of Infrastructure.

In addition to the narrative report, responses in regard to Public Equality Impact Assessment consultations on funding proposals as part of the budget settlements for the 2024-2025 year by the following departments had been provided with the report:-

3.1 Government Budget Consultations (Continued)

- Department for Communities;
- Department of Health (closing date of 29th August 2024);
- Department for Infrastructure (Closing date of 6th September 2024);
- The Executive Office (closing date of 12th September 2024).

The timelines for responses had not been conducive for being presented to Committee for approval, and furthermore, the departments had sought early submissions so that they might have adequate time to consider their content.

It was proposed by Councillor C Kemp, seconded by Councillor A Givan and agreed to recommend that:-

- the response to the Department for Communities be noted – the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee having been delegated authority in June 2024 to agree the response for submission;
- the responses to the Department of Health and the Department for Infrastructure be noted, and that the submission of those responses be agreed on a retrospective basis;
- the response to the Executive Office be agreed and retrospective approval for its submission be agreed by the Committee through Council.

Alderman H Legge entered the Chamber during presentation of this item.
(6.05 pm)

4. Report of Head of Corporate Communications & Administration

4.1 Somme Pilgrimage

4.1.1 Somme Pilgrimage 2024

A report prepared by the Chief Executive in relation to the attendance of the Council's participants in the 2024 Somme Pilgrimage was provided and its content duly noted.

Councillor N Eaton, one of the participants in the 2024 Somme Pilgrimage, expressed her thanks for the opportunity to attend the Pilgrimage and for the arrangements which had been put in place. Councillor Eaton had found the Pilgrimage to be a most poignant experience.

4.1.2 Somme Pilgrimage 2025

The Head of Service referred to the decision of the Committee in September 2023 that the composition of attendees at future Somme Pilgrimages be the Mayor of the Day, the Chair of the Day of the Corporate Services Committee and the Chief Executive (or his nominee) as the Lead Officer; plus up to two Members preferably from parties not already represented by the Mayor and Committee Chairman and who have not represented the Council in past years. This would mean that only one vehicle would be required.

The Committee noted that work would commence in the near future to identify the 2025 attendees, thereby allowing flights and accommodation to be secured at best value.

4.2 2025 Anniversaries Programme

The Committee was reminded that 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II.

In addition to the narrative report, copies of the undernoted items had been provided:-

- copy e-mail dated the 17th July 2024 from the Pageantmaster to NILGA regarding celebratory events on the 8th May 2025 to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day;
- draft terms of reference for a Council working group entitled “2025 Anniversaries Working Group”.

Whilst a communication had only been received in regard to VE Day 80 commemorations, a number of other anniversaries would take place in 2025 including the 80th anniversary of VJ Day and the Armistice/Remembrance, and it was likely that communications would be received from the Pageantmaster about commemoration of those events also.

It was proposed by Councillor B Higginson, seconded by Councillor A Ewing and agreed to recommend that:-

- the 2025 Anniversaries Programme be supported;
- Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council be officially registered as part of the VE 80 programme by the 30th April 2025 and for any other similar events by their respective closing dates;
- a working group as outlined in the report be established in order to deliver a suitable programme of events for VE Day 80 and other anniversaries associated with the end of World War II. The working group would agree its Terms of Reference at its first meeting;

4.2 2025 Anniversaries Programme (Continued)

- party nominations for the working group be provided to the Acting Member Services Manager by the 26th September 2024.

The Head of Service advised that updates from the working group would be reported as appropriate through the Committee, together with approval requested for any associated programmes and budget requirements.

4.3 Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance 2024
Saturday 2nd November 2024 – Belfast Waterfront Hall

In addition to the narrative report, the Committee was provided with a copy of a letter dated the 19th July 2024 from the Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance Committee in regard to the above event and its associated programme.

The organisers of the event had been contacted and - should the sponsorship of the advertisement be recommended for approval - they would accept submission of the advertisement at a later date than that stipulated in their letter.

It was proposed by Councillor B Higginson, seconded by Alderman A Grehan and agreed that:-

- the Council sponsor a half page advertisement in the Festival of Remembrance programme at a cost of £500.00;
- five tickets for the event be purchased (price not yet confirmed but had been £25.00 per ticket in 2023); the attendees to be Mayor & Guest; Chair and Vice-Chair of Corporate Services Committee, and the Veterans' Champion, or their nominees.

All other Members of Council were encouraged to attend the event, the purchase of tickets being at their own expense.

The Head of Communities left the Chamber during this item. (6.15 pm)

4.4 Area Integrated Partnership Boards

The narrative report of the Head of Service reported extensively on the development and implementation of the Integrated Care System for Northern Ireland (ICS NI) which is the new framework for planning health and social care services in Northern Ireland.

To support the ICS NI, five Area Integrated Partnership Boards (AIPBs) are being established to work locally in partnership with others to identify local needs, agree priorities etc.

4.4 Area Integrated Partnership Boards (Continued)

Work is ongoing so that ICS NI can stand up in shadow form from Autumn 2024. Work is also ongoing on the establishment of the Regional ICS Partnership Forum and the Shadow AIPBs in the Southern, South Eastern and Western areas. The Shadow AIPBs in the Belfast and Northern areas will be stood up in due course.

The Department of Health is seeking a single councillor nomination from each relevant council in the AIPB area. Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council straddles the geographical area of two AIPBs, ie Belfast and South Eastern, therefore a Council nomination for each of those two areas is being sought.

It is expected that a Shadow AIPB member will undertake a term of up to four years pending regulations' approval with a typical commitment being one day per month for attendance at Shadow AIPB meetings.

Being an external appointment Council process, it is appropriate to allocate these places during the D'Hondt mechanism and – on this occasion – selection falls to APNI and UUP.

It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Alderman H Legge and agreed to recommend that the Council's nominations to the Belfast Area Integrated Partnership Board (AIPB) and to the South Eastern AIPB (one for each AIPB) be made on the basis of the D'Hondt system with the positions being allocated to the APNI (1st choice) and the UUP.

The names of the nominated Members would be provided by their relevant Nominating Officers.

Expressions of Interest for the AIPBs had closed on the 6th September. The Department of Health had been advised that this matter was on the agenda for the meeting of the relevant standing committee on the 11th September. Nominations would be processed in advance of Council ratification.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth entered the Chamber during presentation of this item. (6.17 pm)

5. Report of Head of Finance

5.1 Estimates 2025-2026 – Schedule of Meetings

A draft programme of meetings for the 2025/2026 Estimates' process had been provided. The Head of Service reported that the two provisional dates highlighted in the schedule were now confirmed, pointing out that the Regeneration & Growth Committee in February 2025 would now meet during the week commencing the 10th February 2025 so as to accommodate the Special Meeting of Council being held on the 6th February 2025 to strike the Rate.

5.1 Estimates 2025-2026 – Schedule of Meetings (Continued)

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Councillor C Kemp and agreed to recommend that the programme of meetings for the 2025/2026 Estimates' process be approved.

The Head of Service advised that two workshops for Members would be held in the near future to discuss the Estimates.

5.2 Car Parking Bad Debt Write Off

The Head of Finance reported on the matter of Bad Debt associated with the car parking function which had transferred to the Council on the 1st April 2015.

It was proposed by Councillor A Ewing, seconded by Councillor P Burke and agreed to recommend that the debt recorded in relation to car parking is written off the ledgers of the Department for Infrastructure.

6. Report of Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development

6.1 Workforce Reports

Reports on the undernoted topics in relation to Council staff across all Departments had been provided with the report and their contents duly noted.

- Attendance Management Report for period ended 30th June 2024;
- Recruitment Reports – (i) Advert & Selection; and (ii) Appointments;
- Workforce Profile.

The Head of Service responded to a number of questions and arising therefrom agreed to:-

- confirm the reason as to why neither the Department for Communities nor the NI Audit Office had published absence information since 2021/2022. It was likely Covid-related but this would be confirmed;
- information contained in future reports in regard to “absence from work due to stress” being displayed so as to reflect the nature of stress which was causing the absence.

7. Any Other Business – Non-Confidential

7.1 LGBTQ – Decisions arising from Notice of Motion
Councillor J Harpur

Councillor J Harpur enquired as to when an update on the decisions regarding the Notice of Motion associated with the LGBTQ community might be forthcoming.

The Director of Organisation Development & Innovation advised that such a report would be presented to the October 2024 meeting of Committee.

7.2 War Memorials – Additional Inscriptions
Councillor B Higginson

Councillor B Higginson sought clarification on the criteria for additional inscriptions on war memorials.

The Head of Corporate Communications & Administration advised that a policy was in existence for additional inscriptions on war memorials.

7.3 Invitation to Civic Events – Policy
Councillor C Kemp

Councillor C Kemp enquired as to when the revised policy on “Invitations to Civic Events” might be presented to Committee.

The Head of Corporate Communications & Administration advised that such a report would be presented to a meeting later in the year.

8. Confidential Report from Director of Finance & Corporate Services

The reasons for confidentiality were as set out in the agenda, ie:-

8.1 Report on Tender Awards
(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information.)

Redacted report to be available following ratification and signing of contracts.

8.2 Single Tender Action Quarterly Update – September 2024
(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information.)

Redacted report to be available following ratification by Council on 24th September 2024.

8.3 Capital Programme Movements

(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information.)

Report will never become available.

8.4 Provision of Catering & Bar Services at Lagan Valley Island

(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information.)

Redacted report to be available when the contract has been procured – estimated at August 2025.

8.5 Management Accounts for Period 4 of 2024/2025

(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information.)

Redacted report to be available following ratification by Council on 24th September 2024.

8.6 Quarterly Finance Reports

(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information.)

Redacted report to be available following ratification by Council on 24th September 2024.

8.7 Treasury Outturn Report – 2023/2024

(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information.)

Report to be available following ratification by Council on 24th September 2024.

8.8 Treasury Outturn Report – Q1 of 2024/2025

(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information.)

Report to be available following ratification by Council on 24th September 2024.

8.9 Tender for Occupational Health Services

(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information.)

Report to be available on 2nd December 2024.

8.10 Efficiency Review Steering Group

(Confidential for reason of information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a government department and employees of, or office holders under the Council.)

Redacted report to be available following ratification by Council on 24th September 2024.

In Committee

It was proposed by Alderman A Ewart, seconded by Councillor C Kemp and agreed that the Confidential Report of the Director be considered “in Committee”. (Recording was paused at this stage in proceedings, and any members of the press and public left the meeting.)

Alderman A Grehan left the Council Chamber. (6.34 pm)

8.1 Report on Tender Awards

Presented by the Head of Assets who also responded to Members’ questions.

Tender Reports and a Summary of Tenders Awarded had been provided with the narrative report.

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Councillor A Givan and agreed to recommend that the tenders awarded in regard to the following contracts, together with the attendant tender reports, be noted:-

- T23/24-035 – Food & Drink Tender;
- T23/24-028 – Navigation House Access Path;
- T23/24-030 – Power Washing Services.

It was further agreed to recommend that the signing and sealing of the Tender documents be approved.

Alderman A Grehan returned to the Chamber during discussion of this item. (6.37 pm)

8.2 Single Tender Action Quarterly Update – September 2024

Presented by the Head of Assets.

In addition to the narrative report, a schedule of contracts awarded under the Single Tender Award process for the period 1st April 2024 – 20th August 2024 was provided and duly noted.

8.3 Capital Programme Movements

Presented by the Head of Planning & Capital Development. The Director of Environmental Services (Acting), the Capital Programme Manager (Acting) and the Capital Accountant were in attendance for this item and available to respond to questions.

Councillor A Ewing declared an interest in an item contained within the report on the Capital Programme. (Recorded at Item 2.)

In addition to the comprehensive narrative report, the Capital Programme review as of July 2024 had been provided. Such a report was being presented to the Committee on a quarterly basis.

Officers responded to various questions on various projects within the Capital Programme and also offered a workshop for new members to the Corporate Services Committee so as to outline the capital governance process, if this would be considered helpful.

It was proposed by Alderman A Ewart, seconded by Councillor B Higginson and agreed to recommend that:-

- the current financial position of the Capital Programme as of July 2024 and as outlined in the report, be agreed;
- the movement of the projects for the former Hilden Primary School and the Hydebank Pavilion from Phase 1(b) to phase 2 be agreed;
- the proposed reallocation of the amount as detailed in the report to the Works Feasibility Fund from Reserves be agreed;
- the funding opportunity released by the UK Prosperity Fund with governance arrangements to be brought forward on this matter be agreed;
- the other movements and changes of projects within the programme and the proposed actions whereby forecasted budgets are to be realigned be noted;
- in regard to Lough Moss - the proposed allocation from the Contingency Fund of the amount as detailed in the report be noted.

Councillor A Ewing left the Chamber during discussion at 6.53 pm and returned to it at 6.57 pm.

Alderman A Ewart left the Chamber during discussion at 7.15 pm and returned to it at 7.20 pm.

Councillor C Kemp left the Chamber during discussion at 7.20 pm and returned to it at 7.22 pm.

8.4 Provision of Catering & Bar Services at Lagan Valley Island

Presented by the Head of Corporate Communications & Administration who, together with the Director of Finance & Corporate Services and the Head of Assets, responded to Members' questions.

The officers particularly addressed Members' concerns as to the reasons why the procurement of this provision had been so protracted.

It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Alderman H Legge and agreed to recommend that:-

- the update on the outcome of the recent procurement exercise for the provision of Catering & Bar Services at Lagan Valley Island be noted;
- the Single Tender Action for the current catering services' contractor to continue for a further period of nine months be agreed
- a new tender exercise for the provision of Catering & Bar Services at Lagan Valley Island be commenced so as to establish a new contract from the 1st August 2025.

The Capital Programme Manager (Acting) and the Capital Accountant left the Chamber during discussion. (7.26 pm)

The Director of Environmental Services (Acting) left the Chamber during discussion. (7.27 pm)

The Head of Planning & Capital Development left the Chamber during discussion. (7.46 pm)

Councillor B Higginson left the meeting during discussion. (7.46 pm)

8.5 Management Accounts – Period 4 of 2024/2025

Presented by the Head of Finance.

The Management Accounts for the period ending the 31st July 2024, together with an extensive narrative report by way of explanation, were provided and duly noted.

The Head of Finance responded to questions posed by Members. The Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to comments made in regard to costs associated with Judicial Reviews.

Councillor B Higginson returned to the Chamber during discussion. (7.51 pm)

8.6 Quarterly Finance Reports

Presented by the Head of Finance.

Members noted the content of the following:-

- the information contained in the narrative report;
- the report on Repairs & Renewals for Q1 of 2024/2025;
- the report on Department for Communities' budgets for Q1 of 2024/2025.

The Chief Executive left the meeting remotely during this item of business.
(7.56 pm)

8.7 Treasury Outturn Report – 2023/2024

Presented by the Head of Finance.

Members noted the content of the following:-

- the information contained in the narrative report;
- the 2023/2024 Treasury Management Outturn Report;
- the Prudential and Treasury Indicators approved for 2023/2024 against which performance was compared.

8.8 Treasury Outturn Report – Q1 of 2024/2025

Presented by the Head of Finance.

Members noted the content of the following:-

- the information contained in the narrative report;
- the Treasury Management Report for Q1 of 2024/2025;
- the Prudential and Treasury Indicators for Q1 of 2024/2025 setting out a review of the Council's performance against the indicators approved for 2024/2025.

8.9 Tender for Occupational Health Services

Presented by the Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development who also responded to Members' questions.

In addition to the narrative report, the following documents had been provided:-

- Business Case for the Provision of Occupational Health Services;
- Equality & Good Relations Screening document;
- Rural Needs Impact Assessment document.

It was proposed by Councillor J Harpur, seconded by Alderman H Legge and agreed to recommend that:-

- the Business Case for the provision of Occupational Health Services be noted and that Option 4 as contained in the report of the Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development be accepted and progressed;
- the Equality & Good Relations Screening document and the Rural Needs Impact Assessment be noted.

Alderman A Grehan left the Chamber during discussion at 8.06 pm and returned to it at 8.09 pm.

8.10 Efficiency Review Steering Group

Presented by the Director of Organisation Development & Innovation who, together with the Head of Economic Development, responded to Members' questions.

In addition to the narrative report, the minutes of the meeting of the Efficiency Review Steering Group (ERSG) held on the 3rd September 2024 had been provided.

It was proposed by Councillor C Kemp, seconded by Councillor N Eaton and agreed to recommend that:-

- the minutes of the meeting of the Efficiency Review Steering Group held on the 3rd September 2024 be noted;
- the recommendations of the Efficiency Review Steering Group in regard to the proposed two staffing structures as detailed in the Director's report be approved.

9. Any Other Business – Confidential

There was no further business of a confidential nature raised.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor C Kemp, seconded by Alderman A Ewart and agreed to come “out of Committee”. Normal business and audio recording were resumed.

10. Any Other Business

Dealt with under Item 7.

The meeting concluded at 8.15 pm.

MAYOR/CHAIR