

**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 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 6.00 pm.**

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

Councillor The Hon N Trimble (Chair)

Councillor N Eaton (Vice-Chair)

The Right Worshipful The Mayor  
Councillor K Dickson

Aldermen A Ewart MBE, M Gregg and A Grehan

Councillors A Ewing, A Givan, J Harpur, B Higginson,  
C Kemp and D Lynch

**PRESENT IN A  
REMOTE LOCATION  
(COMMITTEE)**

Deputy Mayor  
Councillor R Carlin

Alderman H Legge

Councillor J Lavery BEM

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

Alderman O Gawith

Councillors P Catney and G Hynds

**OTHER MEMBERS  
OF COUNCIL  
PRESENT IN a  
REMOTE LOCATION:**

Alderman J Tinsley

Councillor J Gallen

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive (Remote)  
Director of Finance & Corporate Services  
Director of Regeneration & Growth (Remote)  
Head of Assets  
Head of Corporate Communications & Administration  
Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development  
Member Services Officers (RN & EW)

### Commencement of Meeting

The Chair, Councillor N Trimble, welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that it 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.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin; and Alderman H Legge joined the meeting on a remote basis during the housekeeping announcements. (6.02 pm and 6.03 pm respectively.)

### Meeting attendees at remote locations

Councillor B Higginson enquired about the provision of a screen in the Chamber so that those attendees in the Chamber might be aware of those persons who were attending the meeting on a remote basis. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services informed Members as to why this facility had been available for a Council meeting but was not yet available for Committee meetings. The Director advised that the provision of such a facility was being investigated with the consultants for the public address system and that an additional piece of equipment would be required.

The Chairman advised of those Members and Officers who were in attendance on a remote basis.

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of Councillors T Beckett and G McCleave; the Director of Organisation Development & Innovation, and the Head of Finance.

#### 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.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Report of Director of Finance & Corporate Services

3.1 Notice of Motion - Transparency

A Notice of Motion on the subject of “Transparency” had been proposed by Councillor G Hynds and seconded by Councillor P Catney at the meeting of Council held on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025. The Council had agreed that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Corporate Services Committee for consideration. The Notice of Motion was set out in the Director’s report.

Councillors Hynds and Catney are not members of the Corporate Services Committee. However the Chairman invited them to speak to the Motion at this juncture in the meeting. This was agreed by the Committee.

Councillor Hynds presented his Notice of Motion and elaborated on its content. Councillor P Catney spoke in favour of the Notice of Motion and expressed concern that minority parties were not represented on various groupings in the Council such as the Party Group Leaders Forum.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin; Alderman O Gawith and Councillor B Higginson spoke in favour of the Notice of Motion and advised that their respective parties would be supporting it.

It was proposed by Councillor C Kemp, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin, and agreed that the Notice of Motion on the subject of Transparency be adopted.

Alderman J Tinsley joined the meeting on a remote basis during discussion of this item. (6.05 pm)

Councillor D Lynch left and returned to the Chamber during discussion of this item. (6.18 pm and 6.19 pm respectively)

Councillor P Catney left the Chamber at the conclusion of this item. (6.21 pm)

4. Report of Director of Organisation Development & Innovation

4.1 Efficiency Review Steering Group  
Meeting – 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025

In the absence of the Director of Organisation Development & Innovation, her report was presented by the Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development.

In addition to the narrative report, copy of the outcome report of the meeting of the Efficiency Review Steering Group (ERSG) held on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025 had been provided. The outcome report detailed the steps that would be taken so that the Corporate Services Committee which is the decision-making

4.1 Efficiency Review Steering Group  
Meeting – 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025 (Continued)

committee for the ERSG would be more informed of the decisions that it was being asked to consider and agree.

It was agreed to recommend that the outcome report of the ERSG meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025 be noted.

Councillor B Higginson left the Chamber during the presentation of this item. (6.22 pm)

5. Report of Head of Corporate Communications & Administration

5.1 2025 Anniversaries Working Group – Update

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

- Minutes of meeting of the VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Working Group held on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025;
- Anniversary Programme (as of 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025), together with associated budgetary costs.

In addition to VE Day, the Head of Service outlined preliminary arrangements for the commemoration of VJ Day.

A number of Members commended the Working Group and the Officers for the work that was being put into the commemorations.

It was proposed by Alderman H Legge, seconded by The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, and agreed that the minutes of the meeting of the Working Group held on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and also the Anniversary Programme (as at the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025) be noted.

The Head of Corporate Communications & Administration advised that – whilst the final number was not yet known - the number of applications to the VE Day 80 Small Grants Fund would appear to be over-subscribed. If that is the case, a report on this matter would be made to the Communities & Wellbeing Committee, the Head of Service having noted comments about a desire to increase the fund in the event of over-subscription.

Councillor G Hynds made Members aware that a local RAF veteran – Mr Fred Jennings - would hope to be celebrating his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday within the next few days. The Ulster Aviation Society would be marking this milestone birthday.

Councillor B Higginson returned to the Chamber during presentation of this item. (6.24 pm)

6. Report of Head of Finance

6.1 Department of Finance for NI  
Supplementary Consultation on Domestic Rating Measures  
(Closing date: 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025)

In the absence of the Head of Finance, her report was presented by the Director of Finance & Corporate Services.

The Department of Finance had launched a supplementary consultation in regard to Domestic Rating Measures with a closing date of the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

The proposals contained in the supplementary consultation were outlined in the report, with the consultation being available at:-

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/consultations/supplementary-consultation-domestic-rating-measures>

Given the nature of the proposals contained within the consultation and that it was probable that individual councillors/political parties would have different views thereon, it was agreed to recommend that the consultation be noted.

The Director advised that the Minister of Finance was working with both SOLACE and NILGA on this matter, and that if any information was received from those bodies, it would be circulated to Members which could assist them in their responses.

Councillor J Gallen left the meeting on a remote basis at the conclusion of this item. (6.29 pm)

7. Report of Head of Assets

7.1 Update on Preparation for New Procurement Regulations

The Head of Assets referred to a new Procurement Act which was due to go live on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025. The Head of Assets outlined the differences between the new and the current regulations and reported extensively on work already carried by the Procurement Unit and that planned so as to meet the requirements of the regulations.

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

- the implications of the legislation, together with actions both already implemented and those planned, be noted and agreed;

7.1 Update on Preparation for New Procurement Regulations (Continued)

- in the interim and ahead of amendments to the Accounting Manual, the adoption of a MAT (Most Advantageous Tender) approach as opposed to the MEAT (Most Economically Advantageous Tender) approach be agreed with the MAT approach to be outlined in a section of the business case and be explicit when being presented to Committee;
- a further update report be brought to the Committee in June 2025 by which time the new legislation would have been in place for a few months.

8. Any Other Business – Non-Confidential

8.1 Meeting attendees at remote locations  
Alderman A Ewart

In response to a question from Alderman A Ewart, the Director of Finance & Corporate Services explained the reasons as to why attendees in the Chamber at a recent Council meeting had been able to see those attendees at a remote location but that this facility - at present - was not possible for Committee meetings. (It had been to do with the fact that the Council meeting was already live-streamed with technicians in attendance.)

9. Confidential Report from Director of Finance & Corporate Services

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

9.1 Single Tender Action Quarterly Update - December 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 the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

9.2 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 by Council on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and the signing of contracts.

9.3 Management Accounts – Period 9 (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 the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

9. Confidential Report from Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Continued)

9.4 Building Resilience

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

Report will become available when final financial statements are released.

In Committee

It was proposed by Councillor A Ewing, seconded by Councillor B Higginson 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.) (6.37 pm)

In advance of consideration of the confidential reports, Alderman A Grehan expressed concern at the temperature of the Chamber and asked that it be brought to a more comfortable level. This request was noted by the Officers for appropriate action.

The Head of Corporate Communications & Administration left the Chamber. (6.40 pm)

9.1 Single Tender Action Quarterly Update - December 2024

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

In addition to the narrative report, a schedule of contracts awarded under the Single Tender Award process for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 was provided and duly noted. Members’ attention was drawn to the fact that the number of STAs was significantly lower compared to the similar time period in the financial year of 2023/2024.

9.2 Report on Tender Awards

Presented by the Head of Assets.

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

It was proposed by Councillor J Harpur, seconded by Councillor B Higginson and agreed to recommend that the tenders awarded in regard to the following contracts, together with the attendant tender reports, be noted:-

- T24/25-027: “Pathways to Employment for Individuals with a Disability” Programme;
- T24/25-039: Replacement Synthetic Carpet, Maghaberry Community Centre;
- T2425-017: Provision of Staff Uniforms for LCCC Sports Services Unit;
- T24/25-031: Play Area Refurbishment 2024-2025.

9.2 Report on Tender Awards (Continued)

It was further agreed on the Proposal made by Councillor Harpur and seconded by Councillor Higginson to recommend that the signing and sealing of the Tender documents be approved.

9.3 Management Accounts – Period 9 of 2024/2025

In the absence of the Head of Finance, her report was presented by the Director of Finance & Corporate Services who responded to Members' questions.

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

The Director agreed to speak off-line with Alderman A Ewart or provide him with information in relation to staffing costs and in particular those attributable to agency costs.

9.4 Building Resilience

Presented by the Director of Finance & Corporate Services who responded to Members' questions

A report on building resilience from a financial perspective had been provided. The Director explained the content thereof and highlighted pertinent issues with particular reference to the Repairs & Renewals Fund and the ongoing Asset Management Strategy.

It was proposed by Councillor B Higginson, seconded by Alderman A Grehan and agreed to recommend that the proposed approach to allocating the underspend relating to 2024/2025 and as outlined in the report be approved.

10. Any Other Business – Confidential

10.1 Local Government Staff Commission  
2025/2026 Contribution for Continuing Operations  
Alderman A Ewart

Alderman A Ewart referred to correspondence dated the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025 from the Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland (LGSC) which had been included in the February 2025 Information & Correspondence Schedule for Finance & Corporate Services.

The letter sought payment from the Council by way of its 2025/2026 contribution for the continuing operations of the LGSC.



10.1 Local Government Staff Commission  
2025/2026 Contribution for Continuing Operations (Continued)

It was proposed by Alderman A Ewart, seconded by Councillor B Higginson and agreed that the LGSC be asked to provide a breakdown of its continuing operations which had resulted in an increase in the apportioned contributions from councils.

The Chief Executive clarified the amount of the Council's contribution. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services confirmed that – in line with delegated authority for the payment of annual subscriptions/contributions for which there was budget in the Estimates, the LGSC contribution would be paid.

The Head of Corporate Communications & Administration returned to the Chamber during discussion. (7.10 pm)

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, seconded by Councillor A Ewing and agreed to come “out of Committee”. Normal business and the audio recording were resumed.

11. Any Other Business

Dealt with under Item 8.

The meeting concluded at 7.11 pm.

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MAYOR/CHAIR