

**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 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 6.00 pm.**

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

Councillor B Higginson (Chair)  
Councillor J Bamford (Vice-Chair)  
The Right Worshipful The Mayor  
Alderman A Grehan  
Aldermen A Ewart MBE, M Gregg and P Porter  
Councillors T Beckett, K Dickson, A Ewing,  
J Harpur, G McCleave, R McLernon and N Parker

**PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION (COMMITTEE)**

Councillors R Carlin and J Lavery BEM

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

Alderman O Gawith  
Councillors P Catney, G Hynds, U Mackin and M McKeever

**OTHER MEMBERS OF COUNCIL PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION**

Alderman J Tinsley  
Councillors A Givan and B Magee

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive  
Director of Organisation Development & Innovation  
Head of Assets  
Head of Finance  
Head of Governance & Communications  
Head of Planning & Capital Development  
Member Services Officers (RN & EW)

**Commencement of Meeting**

The Chair, Councillor B Higginson, welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished them a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year.

The Chair advised that 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 placed on silent mode for the duration of the meeting. Members attending remotely were asked to keep their cameras on. 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 Chief Executive outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Report of Head of Governance & Communications

3.1 St Patrick's Day – Presentation of Shamrock

In addition to the narrative report, Members had been provided with copy of a letter dated the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026 from the Commanding Officer of 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment, regarding its St Patrick's Day Presentation of Shamrock event being held in Royal Hillsborough on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Irish was seeking assistance from the Council to enhance the event and to bring it into the community for the first time.

It was proposed by Councillor J Bamford and seconded by Alderman P Porter that financial assistance in the sum of £10,000 be made available to support infrastructure and event planning associated with 2 Royal Irish's Presentation of Shamrock event being held in Royal Hillsborough on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

Councillor G McCleave stated that he was unable to accept the recommendation before the Committee as he considered that the evaluation of this request for assistance appeared to have been less rigorous than normal.

A recorded vote was taken, the voting being as follows:-

**For the Proposal:** Councillor J Bamford, Councillor T Beckett, Councillor K Dickson, Alderman A Ewart, Councillor A Ewing, Alderman M Gregg, Alderman A Grehan, Councillor J Harpur, Councillor B Higginson, Councillor J Lavery, Councillor R McLernon, Councillor N Parker, Alderman P Porter. **(Total = 13)**

**Against the Proposal:** Councillor R Carlin, Councillor G McCleave. **(Total = 2)**

3.1 St Patrick's Day – Presentation of Shamrock (Continued)

The proposal in the name of Councillor J Bamford and seconded by Alderman P Porter was declared “carried” on a vote of 13 for the proposal and two against it.

Councillor R Carlin joined the meeting on a remote basis during the Head of Service’s presentation of this item. (6.05 pm)

Alderman J Tinsley left the meeting on a remote basis after the conclusion of this item. (6.10 pm)

4. Any Other Business – Non-Confidential

4.1 Plaque at Lagan Valley Island for the former Prince Andrew Councillor G Hynds

Councillor G Hynds sought information as to the decision-making process associated with the removal of the plaque at the tree planted in the grounds of Lagan Valley Island by the former Prince Andrew. The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Alderman A Grehan, and Alderman P Porter also sought clarity on this. The Chief Executive responded to this matter in confidential business.

5. Confidential Report from Chief Executive

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

5.1 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 become available following Council on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026 and the signing of the contract.

5.2 Quarterly Update on the Financial Position of the Capital Programme 2025-2030

(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 become available post financial year-end with the Capital Programme released as part of the budget setting process each year.

5.3 Movements & Changes in the Capital Programme to November 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 become available post financial year-end with the Capital Programme released as part of the budget setting process each year.

5.4 Debt Write-Off Request

(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 become available following Council on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

5.5 Estimates 2026/2027 – Directorate Position

(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. (Final estimates will be released in February 2026.)

5.6 Estimates 2026/2027 – Corporate Update

(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. (Final estimates will be released in February 2026.)

5.7 Efficiency Review Steering Group (ERSG) Meetings

(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, or office holders under, the Council.)

Redacted report to become available following Council on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

5.8 Finance and Legal Support

(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.

“In Committee”

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Alderman A Ewart and agreed that the Confidential Report of the Chief Executive be considered “in Committee”. (Recording was paused at this stage in proceedings. The press member left the meeting and there were no public present.) (6.15 pm)

### 5.1 Report on Tender Awards

Presented by the Head of Assets.

A tender report and a summary of the tender awarded had been provided with the narrative report.

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Councillor G McCleave and agreed to recommend that the tender awarded in regard to the following contract, together with the attendant tender report, be noted:-

- T25/26-022 PPM & RM 25: Kitchen Grease Extract Systems.

It was further agreed on the Proposal made by Alderman M Gregg and seconded by Councillor G McCleave to recommend that the signing and sealing of the Tender documents be approved.

The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Alderman A Grehan, left the Chamber during the Head of Service's presentation of this item. (6.16 pm)

### 5.2 Quarterly Update on the Financial Position of the Capital Programme 2025-2030

Presented by the Head of Planning & Capital Development.

In addition to the narrative report, the Capital Programme Review as at the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025 had been provided. The Head of Planning & Capital Development responded to Members' questions thereon.

It was proposed by Alderman P Porter, seconded by Councillor G McCleave and agreed to recommend that:-

- the narrative report be noted;
- the capital budget as at the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and as set out in the report be agreed, it being noted that the net cost of the Capital Programme remains within the approved budget, taking account of the most recent movements and changes.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development undertook to speak off-line with Councillor N Parker about the Stockdam Glen Linear Park project.

The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Alderman A Grehan, returned to the Chamber during discussion of this item. (6.20 pm)

### 5.3 Movements & Changes in the Capital Programme to November 2025

Presented by the Head of Planning & Capital Development who responded to Members' questions.

It was proposed by Alderman P Porter, seconded by Councillor J Harpur and agreed to recommend that the following be agreed:-

- the narrative report;
- the movements, changes and revised budgets of the projects as specified in the report;
- the financial uplift as detailed in regard to the overall Capital Programme budget so as to accommodate the Carryduff Primary School Pitches project.

In regard to the Carryduff Primary School Pitches project, the Head of Planning & Capital Development pointed out that the decision to include this project followed consultation with the Members for the DEA.

Alderman P Porter referred to the active contribution which Christopher Stalford MLA (now deceased) had made to bring the Carryduff Primary School Pitches project to fruition and asked to have this placed on record. Alderman Porter also commended the work of Councillor B Higginson in bringing this project forward.

### 5.4 Debt Write-Off Request

Presented by the Head of Finance who responded to Members' questions.

It was proposed by Councillor A Ewing, seconded by Alderman M Gregg and agreed to recommend that the debt as set out in the Head of Finance's report be written off.

Councillor T Beckett left the Chamber during the Head of Finance's presentation of this item. (6.27 pm)

### 5.5 Estimates 2026/2027

#### 5.5.1 Directorate Position

Presented by the Head of Finance.

The report and appendices covered the Finance & Corporate Services Directorate; the Organisation Development & Innovation Directorate; and the Chief Executive's Office.

5.5 Estimates 2026/2027 (Continued)

5.5.1 Directorate Position (Continued)

An extensive narrative report together with the following for the two directorates and the office named above had been provided:-

- 2026/2027 Estimates with 2025/2026 Actuals for Period 7;
- 2026/2027 Payroll/Non-Payroll/Expenditure/Income Split with corresponding figures for 2025/2026;
- Detailed Estimates Overview per Service Unit;
- Repairs & Renewal Schedule for 2026/2027;
- Capital Programme Spend Profiles (December 2025).

The Head of Finance and the Director of Organisation Development & Innovation responded to Members' questions and clarified a number of issues.

The Head of Finance agreed that any future reports would include further narrative where there were significant changes from the previous year's budget.

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Councillor J Lavery and agreed to recommend that the Draft Estimates as presented for the Finance & Corporate Services Directorate; the Organisation Development & Innovation Directorate; and the Chief Executive's Office, be agreed and be submitted into the overall estimates of the Council for the year commencing the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

Councillor A Ewing left the Chamber during presentation of the item. (6.32 pm)

5.5.2 Estimates 2026/2027 – Corporate Update

Presented by the Head of Finance who responded to Members' questions.

An extensive narrative report had been provided. The Head of Finance took Members through the report, and its content was duly noted.

5.5.3 Special Meeting of Corporate Services Committee

The Chair reminded Members of the Special Meeting of the Corporate Services Committee scheduled for Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026 at 6.00 pm, the purpose of which being to make recommendations as to the Domestic and Non-Domestic Rates to be struck for 2026/2027.

5.6 Efficiency Review Steering Group (ERSG) Meetings

Presented by the Director of Organisation Development & Innovation. The Head of Assets and the Head of Planning & Capital Development were also available at the meeting to provide clarification if so required.

5.6 Efficiency Review Steering Group (ERSG) Meetings (Continued)

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

- minutes and action document of a meeting of the Efficiency Review Steering Group (ERSG) held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025,
- minutes and action document of a meeting of the Efficiency Review Steering Group (ERSG) held on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025, together with related presentations which had been made to that meeting in regard to the Planning & Capital Development Unit and the Assets Unit (Procurement Section).

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Alderman A Ewart and agreed to recommend that:-

- the minutes and action documents of the meetings of the Efficiency Review Steering Group held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September and 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025 be noted;
- the recommendations of the Efficiency Review Steering Group in regard to the proposed staffing structures as detailed in the Director's report for amendments to the Planning & Capital Development Unit and the restructuring of the Assets Unit (Procurement Section) be agreed.

As no meetings of the ERSG would be taking place before April 2026, the Director of Organisation Development & Innovation had agreed to provide the ERSG with a monthly update. It was agreed that the circulation of this update be widened to the Committee.

5.7 Finance and Legal Support

Being dealt with at conclusion of meeting.

5.8 Council Mobile Phones

The Head of Governance & Communications made a verbal report on a number of aspects in regard to mobile phones. A further report would be brought to the next meeting.

The Head of Assets and the Head of Planning & Capital Development left the Chamber. (6.59 pm)

5.9 Plaque at Lagan Valley Island for the former Prince Andrew

The Chief Executive advised that, - in order to mitigate against vandalism of the plaque at the tree planted by the former Prince Andrew and also at Lagan Valley Island in general, the plaque had been removed prior to Christmas 2025.

6. Any Other Business – Confidential

No further business of a confidential nature was raised by Members.

All officers apart from the Chief Executive and the Director of Organisation Development & Innovation left the meeting. (7.00 pm)

7. Finance and Legal Support

The Chief Executive circulated and presented a tabled report, and responded to questions posed.

It was proposed by Alderman P Porter, seconded by Councillor R McLernon and agreed to agree the recommendations within the report, namely:-

- to progress with financial and legal support as outlined in the report; and
- that a further update be provided to the Committee in due course.

During the course of this item of business:-

- Councillor B Magee joined the meeting on a remote basis at the start of this item. (7.01 pm)
- the meeting adjourned at 7.50 pm and re-convened at 8.09 pm;
- Councillor A Givan left the meeting on a remote basis when it adjourned at 7.50 pm and did not return thereafter;
- Councillor A Ewing returned to the Chamber during the adjournment at 8.03 pm;
- Councillor B Hynds returned to the Chamber at 8.10 pm;
- Alderman O Gawith left and returned to the Chamber at 8.19 pm.

“Out of Committee”

It was proposed by Councillor J Harpur, seconded by Councillor J Bamford and agreed to come “out of Committee”.

The Chair, Councillor B Higginson, thanked everyone for their attendance and - there being no further business - the meeting concluded at 8.22 pm.

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MAYOR/CHAIR