

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of the Communities & Wellbeing Committee held remotely and in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn on Tuesday 5th November 2024 at 6.00 pm.

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

Councillor J Craig (Chair)
Alderman H Legge (Vice-Chair)
Deputy Mayor
Councillor R Carlin
Aldermen A Grehan, A McIntyre and P Porter
Councillors D Bassett, T Beckett, B Higginson, C Kemp,
S Lowry, G McCleave, T Mitchell and G Thompson

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

Alderman S Skillen
Councillor J Gallen

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

Councillor G Hynds

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

Alderman J Tinsley

IN ATTENDANCE:

Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing
Head of Communities
Head of Sports Services
Acting Head of Parks & Amenities
Member Services Officers (RN & EW)

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and reminded Members 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 on silent mode for the duration of the meeting.

The Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency. 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

There were no apologies,

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 Declarations of Interest were made:-

- Alderman A Grehan – Item 4.2 of Report of Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing – “Ballymacash Sports Academy”. Non pecuniary interest. Involved in event.
- Councillor G Hynds - Item 5.1 of Report of Head of Communities – “DIY & Technical Assistance Fund 2024/2025 – Outcome of Assessment”. Committee member of Lisburn Recreation & Community Hub which is listed as seeking funding under this initiative.
- Councillor C Kemp – Item 5.1 of Report of Head of Communities – “DIY & Technical Assistance Fund 2024/2025 – Outcome of Assessment”. Non-remunerated Director/current Chairperson of Glenclore Community Group which is listed as seeking funding under this initiative.
- Councillor T Mitchell - Item 4.2 of Report of Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing – “Ballymacash Sports Academy”. Non pecuniary interest. Shareholder in Ballymacash Sports Academy.
- Alderman S Skillen - Item 5.1 of Report of Head of Communities – “DIY & Technical Assistance Fund 2024/2025 – Outcome of Assessment”. Non-pecuniary interest. Member of sports group associated with the Ballybeen Improvement Group which is listed as seeking funding under this initiative.

2. Declarations of Interest (Continued)

During the course of the meeting, the following Declarations of Interest were made:-

- Councillor J Craig – Item 5.2 of Report of Head of Communities – “Department for Communities – Integrated Advice Partnership Fund”. Non-pecuniary interest. Wife is Chair of Community Advice Lisburn & Castlereagh (CALC).
- Alderman A Grehan – Item 5.2 of Report of Head of Communities – “Department for Communities – Integrated Advice Partnership Fund”. Non-pecuniary interest. Observer on Community Advice Lisburn & Castlereagh (CALC).

3. Deputations

There were no deputations.

4. Report of Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing

4.1 Notice of Motion – Voice of Young People in Care

A Notice of Motion on the subject of “Voice of Young People In Care” had been proposed by Councillor G Thompson and seconded by Alderman J Baird at the meeting of Council held on the 22nd October 2024. The Council had agreed that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Communities & Wellbeing Committee for consideration.

Councillor Thompson presented her Notice of Motion and elaborated on the reasons behind it. Councillor Thompson referred to the fact that CARE DAY is the world’s largest celebration of children and young people with care experience. CARE DAY in the UK is a joint initiative across five children’s rights’ charities and is led in Northern Ireland by VOYPC (Voice of Young People in Care). CARE DAY 25 takes place on the 21st February 2025, and 2025 would mark the 10th CARE DAY. VOYPC had asked that all councils mark the 10th anniversary by the planting of a commemorative tree.

The content of the Notice of Motion was supported by a number of other Members, Alderman P Porter referring to the fact that Councillor J Lavery was a great advocate for the fostering community.

It was proposed by Councillor G Thompson, seconded by Alderman H Legge and unanimously agreed to recommend that - in order to mark the 10th anniversary of CARE DAY on the 21st February 2025, the Council plant a tree in a public space in its area to recognise and honour those with lived-care experience which includes those persons currently in care, those who have been in care, and those who may experience care in the future.

4.2 Ballymacash Sports Academy – Request for Financial Assistance

Having declared interests in this item of business, Alderman A Grehan and Councillor T Mitchell left the Council Chamber at its outset. (6.15 pm)

The Director reported on correspondence received from the Ballymacash Sports Academy seeking financial assistance to cover the costs of it hosting the UK Armed Forces versus Defence Forces Ireland Football Tournament on the 13th November 2024.

The Director reported extensively on the event which would be live-streamed and cross-community in terms of the local organisations invited to attend. The projected cost to host the tournament was £15,000.00. The Director reminded Members that the Council has a significant history in working with the armed forces through civic and ceremonial occasions, the Veterans' Programme and also its obligations under the Armed Forces Charter.

In addition to the narrative report, the Events Calendar equality screening document had been provided.

It was proposed by Councillor B Higginson, seconded by Alderman A McIntyre and unanimously agreed that retrospective approval be sought from the Council at its meeting to be held on the 25th November 2024 for:-

- a contribution of £5,000.00 to be made to the Ballymacash Sports Academy to assist in the running costs associated with its hosting of the UK Armed Forces versus Defence Forces Ireland Football Tournament at its grounds on the 13th November 2024;
- operational infrastructure support to be provided if so required;
- a letter to be sent to the Ballymacash Sports Academy congratulating them on securing the hosting of this event within the Council's area.

The Director noted comments that other departments of the Council should be encouraged to assist financially or otherwise with this event as, for example, it could generate business in the local community.

Alderman A McIntyre congratulated Ballymacash Rangers Football Club for the notable successes they had enjoyed recently.

5. Report of Head of Communities

5.1 DIY & Technical Assistance Fund 2024/2025
Outcomes of Assessment

Alderman A Grehan and Councillor Mitchell returned to the Chamber at the outset of this item of business. (6.19 pm)

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

- a table of outcomes of assessment under the DIY & Technical Assistance Fund;
- Equality Screening document;
- Rural Needs Impact Assessment.

The Head of Communities reported extensively on the above Fund in terms of its objectives, the number of applications received during the application process, and the outcome thereof.

There had been considerable interest in the Fund, and in fact it had been oversubscribed. To address this oversubscription, the Committee was invited to consider options to address this.

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

- the Head of Service's report and the outcome of the assessment process be noted;
- based on the weighted score following assessment, the 47 applications be awarded the amount deemed eligible of £59,107 and in order to address the over subscription of £9,107, that amount be allocated from the Community Facilities Fund 2024/2025 underspend.

The Head of Communities confirmed that there were no further grant schemes in the current financial year. The Director confirmed that a report on the Local DEA Investment Programme would be presented to the Committee early in 2025.

Alderman S Skillen left the meeting on a remote basis during discussion. (6.20 pm)

5.2 Department for Communities Integrated Advice Partnership Fund

The Chair, Councillor J Craig, declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item of business as his wife is the Chair of Community Advice Lisburn & Castlereagh (CALC). Councillor Craig would be taking no part in the discussion.

Alderman A Grehan also declared a non-pecuniary interest as an Observer on Community Advice Lisburn & Castlereagh (CALC) and took no part in discussion.

The Head of Communities reported extensively on the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund of the Department for Communities (DfC).

The Department for Communities (DfC) has a statutory requirement to provide debt advice for individuals and households in need. It has advised the Council that additional one-off funding has become available for debt advice services. It is temporary funding for 2024-2026 and is not subject to match-funding by the Council. The DfC will allocate the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund via the established Community Support Programme arrangements. The allocation to the Council is £89,181 (£57,766.50 in 2024/2025 and £31,414.50 in 2025/2026). The 2024/2025 allocation commences on 1st October 2024 and if any of that funding is not allocated, it is understood that it can be carried into Council reserves for 2025/2026 with the expressed purpose of remaining ringfenced for an Integrated Advice Partnership Fund.

A confidential draft policy from the DfC by way of a Memorandum of Understanding between the DfC and a District Council was provided for information purposes only.

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

- the Head of Communities' report be noted;
- the Council accept the opportunity via the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund until March 2026 for the delivery of debt advice through a collaborative partnership approach;
- subject to its approval and agreement of specific arrangements that meet the terms and conditions of the Fund and agreed by the DfC, Community Advice Lisburn & Castlereagh (CALC) be the lead partner through a variation of contract to the generalist advice services contract, for the implementation and delivery of the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund until March 2026;
- if CALC is unable to deliver the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund as lead partner, the Council commence a procurement exercise for its implementation and delivery.

5.2 Department for Communities
Integrated Advice Partnership Fund (Continued)

It was noted that promotion of the additional funding would be via current resources and not from the new Fund itself.

Alderman S Skillen returned to the meeting on a remote basis during discussion. (6.25 pm)

5.3 Community Support Programme – Social Supermarket Funding

The committee was aware that Lisburn had formed part of a Social Supermarket pilot programme since 2017. This programme is funded by the Department for Communities (DfC) and - in the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area - is delivered through the Lisburn City Church Community Trust (LCCCT). As reported to the Committee in October 2023 the DfC has a longer-term plan to transfer the management and oversight of the Social Supermarket to the Council.

The Head of Service outlined the history of funding since the inception of the Social Supermarket project, the most recent being a Letter of Offer and Memorandum of Understanding from the DfC. DfC have administered the baseline amount of approximately £60,000 for April – September 2024. A further £133,028.71 is available in the current financial year and Council officers have engaged with the LCCCT on how this funding could be effectively used. The Council will agree terms of reference with the LCCCT to reflect the Memorandum of Understanding from the DfC. The Head of Service detailed the principles that the LCCCT are to take account of and outlined four draft proposals for implementation against the increase in financial assistance from the DfC.

The Head of Service pointed out that the Social Supermarket is funded through Central Government welfare reform money and that there is no guarantee of longer-term receipt of the additional allocation. If DfC funding were to cease, the Council would have to provide funding. Members voiced their support for the Social Supermarket project.

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

- the report of the Head of Communities be noted with specific note to the additional allocation from the Department for Communities of £133,028.71 for the current financial year;
- the additional allocation from the DfC of £133,028.71 be awarded to the Lisburn City Church Community Trust in line with the four draft proposals as outlined in the report.

Councillor G McCleave left the Chamber during discussion. (6.40 pm)

6. Any Other Business – Non-Confidential

6.1 Glenmore Activity Centre - Flooding
Councillor G Hynds

Councillor G Hynds welcomed the works that had been carried out to Glenmore Activity Centre further to recent flooding. The Head of Sports Services outlined further measures that would be taken, and these were welcomed.

The Chair, Councillor J Craig, also placed on record his thanks to the officers and staff involved in the repair work to the Glenmore Activity Centre after the flooding.

Councillor G McCleave returned to the Chamber during discussion. (6.44 pm)

6.2 Twilight Nights – 23rd & 24th October 2024
Councillor C Kemp

Councillor C Kemp expressed her thanks to all who had been involved in the hugely successful and enjoyable “Twilight Night” event on the 24th October 2024. This thanks was echoed by Alderman S Skillen.

These comments were endorsed by the Chair, Councillor J Craig, who made particular reference to the highly successful “Relaxed Twilight Night” event on the 23rd October 2024 for children/young persons with special needs/sensitivity to noise, light etc. This had been very much enjoyed by the children/young persons and much appreciated by their parents/carers.

The Chair had written to all staff involved in the organisation of the Twilight Nights, the “Relaxed Twilight Night” in particular having required a very sensitive and thoughtful approach to the activities and attractions put on that night.

6.3 Meeting of Committee on 3rd December 2024 – Commencement Time
Councillor J Craig (Chair)

The Chair, Councillor J Craig, sought agreement to bring forward the commencement time of the December 2024 meeting of Committee to 5.00 pm so as to accommodate Members’ attendance at Christmas switch-ons later that evening.

It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Councillor B Higginson and agreed to recommend that the meeting of Committee due to be held on the 3rd December 2024 commence at 5.00 pm thereby allowing attendance at Christmas switch-ons later that evening.

7. Confidential Report from Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing

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

7.1 Redevelopment of Dundonald International Ice Bowl & Associated Programmes (DIIB) - Update

(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 in January 2025.

7.2 Proposed Leisure & Community Wellbeing Pricing Schedule 2025/2026

(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 in February 2025 following completion of the Estimates' process.

7.3 Business Case – Litter Collection

(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 in March 2025.

7.4 Business Case – Tree Arboriculture Service

(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 in March 2025.

7.5 Business Case

Gym Equipment for Glenmore and Kilmakee Activity Centres

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

Redacted report once service has been procured.

7.6 Laurelhill Sportszone 3G Pitch – Allocation Criteria & Charges

(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 completion of the process.

7.7 Provision of Leisure Management Software System

(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 upon receipt of signed contract.

7.8 The Hills Restaurant, Castlereagh Hills Golf Club

(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 in January 2025.

In Committee

It was proposed by Councillor B Higginson, seconded by Councillor S Lowry 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.)

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin, left the Chamber. (6.49 pm)

7.1 Redevelopment of Dundonald International Ice Bowl & Associated Programmes (DIIB) - Update

Presented by the Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing.

The Director provided a comprehensive update report which covered current progress, and programme update with associated items.

The sod-cutting ceremony for the new facility had taken place on the 1st November 2024. A number of Members expressed their thanks to all involved in its organisation.

The Director responded to Members’ questions, noting points made about:-

- quarterly progress and finance updates to Committee on both routine and non-routine issues;
- celebratory events for the new facility;
- car parking arrangements during construction;
- provision of mother & baby room;
- involvement of the Council in celebratory events to mark 25 years in existence of the Belfast Giants.

The progress report of the Director was noted as were the following:-

- Contractors Programme;
- Communications Plan;
- Equality Screening document;
- Rural Needs Impact Assessment document.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin, returned to the Chamber during discussion. (6.54 pm)

Alderman A McIntyre left the Chamber and returned to the Chamber during discussion. (7.05 pm and 7.07 pm)

7.2 Proposed Leisure & Community Wellbeing Pricing Schedule 2025/2026

Presented by the Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing.

In addition to the narrative report, the following were provided:-

- Leisure & Community Wellbeing Pricing Schedule for 2025/2026;
- Equality Screening document.

It was proposed by Alderman P Porter, seconded by Councillor G McCleave and agreed to recommend that the recommendations contained within the report be approved.

Alderman A McIntyre asked that a more legible version of the tabular information appended with this item of business be provided to Members.

Councillor B Higginson left the Chamber during the Director's presentation of this item (7.08 pm) and returned to it after the decision had been taken. (7.12 pm)

Councillor T Mitchell left the Chamber at the conclusion of this item. (7.12 pm)

7.3 Business Case – Litter Collection

Presented by the Acting Head of Parks & Amenities.

In addition to the narrative report of the Acting Head of Service, the Business Case for Litter Collection had been provided.

The Acting Head of Service responded to Members' questions.

It was proposed by Alderman P Porter, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin, and agreed to recommend that:-

- the report on the Litter Collection Service be noted;
- the Business Case for the Litter Collection Service be approved; and
- Option 2 as contained in the Business Case be accepted and be progressed by means of a tender process for implementation of the service by the 1st April 2025.

The Head of Service responded to a number of queries regarding the maintenance of Cemetery provision and advised that the programme of work had been reviewed, and for the incoming year the works will commence earlier due to increased growing, with relevant staff.

Councillor T Mitchell returned to the Chamber during presentation of this item. (7.14 pm)

7.4 Business Case – Tree Arboriculture Service

Presented by the Acting Head of Parks & Amenities.

In addition to the narrative report of the Acting Head of Service, the Business Case for Arboriculture Services had been provided.

The Acting Head of Service responded to Members' questions.

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

- the report on the Tree Arboriculture Service be noted;
- the Business Case for the Tree Arboriculture Service be approved, and
- Option 2 as contained in the Business Case be accepted and be progressed by means of a tender process.

The Acting Head of Service noted comments made that Belfast City Council provides this service on an in-house basis.

7.5 Business Case Gym Equipment for Glenmore and Kilmakee Activity Centres

Presented by the Head of Sports Services.

In addition to the narrative report of the Head of Service, the Business Case for the provision of Gym Equipment for Activity Centres (Glenmore and Kilmakee Activity Centres) had been provided.

The Director and the Head of Service responded to Members' questions.

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin, seconded by Alderman A Grehan and agreed to recommend that:-

- the report on Gym Equipment at Glenmore and Kilmakee Activity Centres be noted;
- the Business Case for the provision of Gym Equipment for Activity Centres (Glenmore and Kilmakee) be approved, and
- Option 2 as contained in the Business Case be accepted and be progressed.

7.6 Laurelhill Sportszone 3G Pitch – Allocation Criteria & Charges

Presented by the Head of Sports Services.

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

- Expression of Interest for regular bookings of Laurelhill Sports Zone 3G Pitch;
- 3G Pitch pricing comparison with facilities in other council areas (with lights and without lights);
- Laurelhill Sports Zone 3G Pitch – Equality Screening (September 2024).

The Head of Service responded to Members' questions with regards to benchmarking and a small typographical error.

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

- the Booking Criteria as contained within the Expression of Interest for regular bookings of Laurelhill Sports Zone 3G Pitch be agreed;
- the proposed charges for the Laurelhill Sports Zone 3G Pitch be agreed;
- the review period be after six months' operation of the revised charges and criteria.

Councillor C Kemp left and returned to the Chamber during discussion.
(7.36 pm and 7.40 pm)

Councillor J Gallen left the meeting on a remote basis during discussion.
(7.38 pm)

Alderman J Tinsley joined the meeting on a remote basis during discussion.
(7.46 pm)

Councillor S Lowry left and returned to the Chamber during discussion of this item. (7.47 pm and 7.50 pm)

7.7 Provision of Leisure Management Software System

Presented by the Head of Sports Services.

In addition to the narrative report, an amended Financial Appraisal for the Provision of a Leisure Management Software System was provided. The amended Financial Appraisal was due to revisions of the Business Case and the PUR1 value to that currently in existence.

7.7 Provision of Leisure Management Software System (Continued)

It was proposed by Councillor S Lowry, seconded by Alderman A McIntyre and agreed to recommend that the amended Financial Appraisal for the provision of the Leisure Management Software System be approved, thereby allowing the award of the contract to be facilitated.

Alderman S Skillen left the meeting on a remote basis during presentation of this item. (7.55 pm)

Councillor G Thompson left the Chamber during presentation of this item. (8.00 pm)

7.8 The Hills Restaurant, Castlereagh Hills Golf Club

Presented by the Head of Sports Services.

In addition to the narrative report, copy of a letter dated the 4th September 2024 from the operator of The Hills Restaurant at Castlereagh Hills Golf Club had been provided.

Members were invited to consider a number of recommendations.

The Head of Sports Services responded to Members' questions.

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

- the request from the operator of the Hills Restaurant in regard to the terms of his contract for that facility be acceded to (as opposed to the variation contained within the recommendations);
- the contract be reviewed on an annual basis with the Council having access to the necessary documentation for such a review as set out in the report;
- Sports Services work with The Hills Golf Club and Restaurant to promote it as a destination and also in regard to the food/beverage opportunities that exist there.

Councillor G Thompson returned to the Chamber during discussion. (8.04 pm)

8. Any Other Business – Confidential

There was no other business of a confidential nature raised.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Alderman A McIntyre, seconded by Alderman H Legge and agreed to come “out of Committee”. Normal business and audio recording were resumed.

9. Any Other Business

Dealt with under Item 6.

The Chair reminded Members that he had provided some of his daughter’s wedding cake for them to enjoy after the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 8.20 pm.

MAYOR/CHAIR