

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Remote Meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held on Thursday, 8 September, 2022 at 6:05 pm

PRESENT IN CHAMBER:

Councillor Jenny Palmer (Vice-Chairperson)

Aldermen J Baird

Councillors D J Craig, C McCready, John Palmer and A Swan

PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:

The Right Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor S Carson

Aldermen S Martin, S P Porter and J Tinsley

Councillors S Lowry, J McCarthy and G McCleave

OTHER MEMBERS:

Councillors A Givan, M Gregg, and S Skillen

INDEPENDENT MEMBER:

Mr E Jardine (present in Chamber)

IN ATTENDANCE:

In Chamber:

Chief Executive
Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Performance Improvement Officer
IT Officer
Technician
Member Services Officers

In Remote Location:

Internal Audit Manager

Northern Ireland Audit Office

Mrs C Kane (present in Council Chamber)

Commencement of the Meeting

In the absence of the Chairman, Alderman D Drysdale, who had submitted an apology for tonight's meeting, the Vice-Chairperson, Councillor Jenny Palmer, took the chair and conducted the business on the agenda.

At the commencement of the meeting, the Acting Chairperson, Councillor Jenny Palmer, welcomed those present to the remote meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee which, in line with Local Government (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of District Council Meetings) Regulations (NI) 2020, was being live streamed to enable members of the public to hear and see the proceedings. The Acting Chairperson pointed out that, unless the item on the agenda was considered under confidential business, this meeting would

Commencement of the Meeting (Contd)

be broadcast live online and members of the public should be aware that they were likely to be captured on the livestream. Data captured on the livestream was processed in the exercise of official authority which covered public functions and powers which were set out in law and to perform a specific task in the public interest.

At this point, the Member Services Officer read out the names of the Elected Members and Officers in attendance at the meeting.

The Acting Chairperson, Councillor Jenny Palmer, stated that, whilst the meeting was being live streamed, unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per the Council's Standing Orders. She asked that mobile phones be put on silent or switched off for the duration of the meeting. The Chief Executive outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency, during which Councillor J McCarthy joined the meeting (6.08 pm).

The Acting Chairman welcomed to the meeting Mrs C Kane, Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO).

1. Apologies

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of the Chairman, Alderman D Drysdale, Alderman O Gawith and Councillor J Gallen.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Report from the Performance Improvement Officer

3.1 Performance Improvement Objectives, Case Studies & Associated KPIs – 1st Quarter Review

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor S Carson, joined the meeting during consideration of this item of business (6.15 pm).

Members were provided with a copy of:

- (a) a quarterly monitoring document (covering April - June 2022) on all projects that demonstrated improvement against the 2022/23 Performance Improvement Objectives, including the relevant Performance Improvement KPI. An additional section was included detailing some case studies and customer feedback that had demonstrated improvement during quarter 1; and
- (b) a report from the 'Performance Management System' detailing the Performance Improvement Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the period April – June 2022.

3.1 Performance Improvement Objectives, Case Studies & Associated KPIs – 1st Quarter Review (Contd)

Members noted from the report of the Performance Improvement Officer, information in relation to KPI Reference 217.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor D J Craig and agreed to recommend that the reports at (a) and (b) above be approved.

3.2 Complaints Report – Quarter 1

Councillor S Skillen joined the meeting during consideration of this item of business (6.13 pm).

Members were provided with, and noted the contents of, a copy of a comparative report taken from the Council's Customer Care System detailing the number of comments, complaints and compliments in Quarter 1 of 2022/23.

3.3 Performance Improvement Report 2021/22

Members having been provided with a copy of the Performance Improvement Report for 2021/22, as well as a summary version of the Report, it was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor John Palmer and agreed to recommend that these be approved.

4. Report from the Risk Officer

In the absence of the Risk Officer, her report was presented by the Chief Executive.

4.1 Corporate Risk Register

The Risk Officer set out in her report, an update in respect of the quarterly review of the Corporate Risk Register. Members were provided with, and noted the contents of, a copy of the Corporate Risk Dashboard and were advised that CRR4 Capital Programme, which had been scheduled to be considered at this meeting, would now be considered at the December meeting along with CRR7 Financial Sustainability.

5. Any Other Business

5.1 Board Effectiveness – A Good Practice Guide
Alderman S Martin

Alderman S Martin advised that the Northern Ireland Audit Office had updated the above document in June 2022 to take account of Northern Ireland specific learning over the last few years. He requested that a copy of this document be circulated to Members.

6. Confidential Business

The matters contained in the confidential report would be dealt with “In Committee” due to containing information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

“In Committee”

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor C McCready and agreed that the following matters be considered “in committee”, in the absence of members of the press and public being present. The live-stream was paused at this stage (6.19 pm).

The Performance Improvement Office left the meeting at this point (6.19 pm).

6.1 Report by Internal Audit Manager

6.1.1 Internal Audit Progress Report – August 2022
(Report will not be made available)

Members were provided with, and noted the contents of, a copy of an Internal Audit Progress Report – August 2022. This report summarised internal audit work and progress against the Operational Plan since the last meeting of the Committee on 9 June, 2022. A copy of any internal audit reports referred to in the progress report were also provided in full on SharePoint for Members’ information.

Members noted from the Internal Audit Manager’s report, information in relation to the 2022-23 Internal Audit Operational Plan.

The Chief Executive noted comments regarding the audit review relating to Communications being considered at a future meeting of the Corporate Services Committee.

6.1.2 Internal Audit Charter
(Report will not be made available)

Members having been provided with a copy of an updated Internal Audit Charter, it was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Alderman J Baird and agreed to recommend that this be approved.

6.2 Closed Session

In line with good practice and the Governance and Audit Committee Terms of Reference, Members now met with representatives from External Audit and Internal Audit in a closed session, the purpose of which was to afford Members the opportunity to ask questions that may not specifically be addressed as part of an audit.

6.2 Closed Session (Contd)

The following Officers left the Meeting prior to the closed session taking place (6.26 pm): Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, Member Services Officers and Technician.

It having been announced that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had passed away, the meeting was terminated at 6.32 pm.

Mayor/Chairman