

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held in the Cherry Room, Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn on Tuesday 10th January 2017 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor O Gawith (Chairman)

The Right Worshipful The Mayor
Councillor R B Bloomfield, MBE

Deputy Mayor
Alderman S Martin

Aldermen W J Dillon MBE, D Drysdale, A G Ewart and T Jeffers

Councillors R T Beckett, S Carson, J Craig, A P Ewing, A Grehan,
B Hanvey, V Kamble, A McIntyre and B Mallon

OTHER MEMBERS: Alderman J Tinsley

Councillors P Catney, A Girvin and John Palmer

IN ATTENDANCE: Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Chief Executive
Director of Corporate Services
Director of Environmental Services
Head of Finance & IT
Head of Technical & Estates
Acting Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development
Member Services' Officer

W D & R T Taggart (Architects & Engineers)

Mr Colin Shaw – Partner
Ms Alison Brown – Senior Architect

Commencement of Meeting

The Chairman, Councillor O Gawith, wished those present a Happy New Year and welcomed all to the meeting, in particular those Members who were not members of the Corporate Services Committee but who were in attendance for the presentation on the Space Planning Project associated with Lagan Valley Island.

The Chairman asked that any Member entering or leaving the meeting alert him accordingly so that the Member Services' Officer might accurately reflect arrival and departure times in the minutes.

1. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of Alderman W A Leathem and the Head of Central Support Services.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman 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 at the meeting.

The following Declaration of Interest was made:-

- Councillor A P Ewing - Item 1 of Report of Head of Central Support Services - "Department of Health consultation entitled "Health & Social Care Transformation – Criteria for reconfiguring Health & Social Care Services". (Member of South Eastern Local Commissioning Group)

3. Minutes of Meetings

It was proposed by Councillor S Carson, seconded by Councillor B Mallon and agreed that the minutes of the following meetings of the Committee as adopted by the Council at its meeting held on the 20th December 2016 be confirmed and signed:-

- Special Meeting of Committee with Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of other Standing Committees held on the 12th December 2016;
- Meeting of Committee held on the 13th December 2016.

4. Lagan Valley Island – Space Planning Project Presentation by W D & R T Taggart

To be dealt with later in the meeting.

5. Report of Director of Corporate Services

To be dealt with later in the meeting.

6. Confidential Report of Director of Corporate Services

The Director of Corporate Services sought agreement to bring forward his confidential report as the Chief Executive was in attendance for items of business in the reports of the Acting Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development. This was agreed.

The Chairman advised that the reports of the Acting Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development were confidential for reason of information that (i) was likely to reveal the identity of individuals and (ii) related to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matters arising between the Council or a Government department and employees of, or office holders under, the Council.

It was proposed by Alderman W J Dillon, seconded by Councillor V Kamble and agreed that the HR items in the confidential report of the Director of Corporate Services be considered "in Committee", in the absence of members of the press and public being present.

6.1 Reports of Acting Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development

Presented by Acting Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development.

It was agreed that the confidential reports and recommendations of the Acting Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below and other items noted:-

6.1.1 Efficiency Review 2017 – Report

The Director of Corporate Services and the Member Services' Officer left the meeting at 7.02 pm for the duration of consideration of the items relating to the above item of business. The only officers present were the Chief Executive and the Acting Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development.

Items in regard to the above were dealt with in the Acting Head of Service's main and additional reports.

(a) Efficiency Review Steering Group Recommendations

It was proposed by Councillor A McIntyre, seconded by Councillor V Kamble and agreed to recommend that the recommendations of the Efficiency Review Steering Group be agreed for implementation, and that the amended membership of the Group be noted.

(b) Organisation Design & Severance

It was proposed by Councillor A McIntyre, seconded by Councillor B Hanvey and agreed to recommend that the Council accedes to the request for

(b) Organisation Design & Severance (Contd)

severance for the Member Services' Officer on 28 February 2017 and the Director of Corporate Services on 30 April 2017.

The Director of Corporate Services and the Member Services' Officer returned to the meeting (7.19 pm).

6.1.2 HR & OD Workforce Data

It was agreed to recommend that reports in respect of the following be noted, such reports being in accordance with the Council's Strategic Workforce Plan 2015-2017:-

- Workforce Profile – Headcount, Contract (permanent/fixed term/full-time/part-time) and Agency Workers
- Absence – Days lost per employee and percentage across the Council (includes “Total absence days per month”)
- Long Term Absence – Employees absent due to long term sickness (over 12 weeks)
- Recruitment – Internal trawls and open competition.

The officers responded to Members' comments in relation to absenteeism.

Councillor P Catney left the meeting. (7.20 pm)

During discussion of the above, Councillor B Mallon left and returned to the meeting at 7.22 pm and 7.24 pm respectively.

6.1.3 Single Status Update: Appeals

It was agreed to recommend that the progress report in respect of the number of job evaluation appeals outstanding from the former Councils' Single Status process and the percentages of appeals both successful and unsuccessful be noted.

6.1.4 Review of National Joint Council “Green Book” Pay Spine

It was agreed to recommend that the update on the review of the National Joint Council “Green Book” Pay Spine be noted, the primary reason for this update being the introduction of the National Living Wage.

Additional Report

6.1.5 Efficiency Review Steering Group Recommendations

Dealt with under Item 6.1.1 (a).

6.1.6 Organisation Design & Severance

Dealt with under Item 6.1.1 (b).

It was proposed by Councillor B Mallon, seconded by Councillor A McIntyre and agreed to come out of committee and normal business was resumed.

The Acting Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development left the meeting. (7.25 pm)

7. Reports of Director of Corporate Services

Presented by Director of Corporate Services.

It was proposed by Councillor J Craig, seconded by Councillor A McIntyre and agreed that the reports and recommendations of the Director of Corporate Services be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below and other items noted:-

7.1 Space Planning Project at Lagan Valley Island
Presentation – W D & R T Taggart

To be dealt with later in the Meeting.

7.2 Reports of Head of Central Support Services

In the absence of the Head of Central Support Services, her reports were presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

It was agreed that the reports and recommendations of the Head of Central Support Services be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below and other items noted:-

7.2.1 Department of Health consultation document
“Health & Social Care Transformation – Criteria for
Reconfiguring Health & Social Care Services”
(Closing Date: 20th January 2017)

Further to the previous meeting of the Committee, Members were provided with copies of the undernoted:-

- an updated schedule of the public consultation meetings showing those for 2017. This schedule had been issued to all Members of Council on the 21st December 2016.
- a draft response to the consultation document as agreed by the Health Working Group.

7.2.1 Department of Health consultation document
“Health & Social Care Transformation – Criteria for
Reconfiguring Health & Social Care Services”
(Closing Date: 20th January 2017) (Contd)

It was agreed to recommend that:-

- the updated schedule of public consultation meetings in relation to the above consultation document be noted, the Committee having previously agreed that the attendance of any member at any of these consultation meetings would be approved;
- the draft response to the above consultation document be accepted as the Council’s response thereto and be submitted to the Department of Health by the stipulated closing date of the 20th January 2017.

7.2.2 Health & Social Care in Northern Ireland
“NI Health & Social Care Sector Planning Workshop”
Knockbracken Hall, Knockbracken Healthcare Park,
Saintfield Road, Belfast
Thursday 19th January 2017 – 10.30 am

Members were provided with details of the above workshop for which there was no fee. The only expenses that would be incurred would be those in relation to travel.

All members of the Health Working Group had been notified of this workshop on the 20th December 2016 and no Member had indicated their wish to attend. No nominations were made at the meeting.

7.2.3 Review of Charges

(a) Central Administration Unit - Garden Allotments

The fees in relation to Garden Allotments had been examined and, arising therefrom, it was agreed to recommend that the scale of charges in relation to Garden Allotments for 2017/2018 remain unchanged.

(b) Registration Unit

The fees for the Registration Unit had been examined and – arising therefrom – it was agreed to recommend that the fees for the Registration Unit for 2017/2018 remain unchanged.

7.2.4 Health Working Group
Minutes of Meeting – 9th September 2016

It was agreed to recommend that the minutes of the meeting of the Health Working Group held on the 9th September 2016 be noted.

7.2.5 Lisburn & Castlereagh Policing & Community Safety Partnership - Schedule of Meetings

It was agreed to recommend that the schedule of forthcoming meetings of the Lisburn & Castlereagh PCSP be noted.

Additional Report

7.2.6 Public Health Agency
Draft Corporate Plan 2017-2021
Workshops

Members were advised that – at its meeting held on the 6th December 2016 - the Health Working Group had noted the content of the Draft Corporate Plan (2017-2021) of the Public Health Agency.

In this regard, Members were provided with details of workshops being held in Londonderry and Newtownabbey on the 24th and 27th January 2017 respectively.

No nominations were made for attendance at the workshops referred to above.

The Head of Finance & IT entered the meeting. (7.28 pm)

7.3 Report of Head of Finance & IT

Presented by the Head of Finance & IT.

It was agreed that the report and recommendation of the Head of Finance & IT be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below and other items noted:-

7.3.1 Financial Statement
Period ended the 30th November 2016

It was noted that the net profiled expenditure for the period ended the 30th November 2016 was 7.00% below the approved estimates for the financial year 2016/2017.

The Head of Technical & Estates entered the meeting. (7.29 pm)

8. Space Planning Project at Lagan Valley Island
Presentation – W D & R T Taggart

The representatives from W D & R T Taggart entered the meeting. (7.30 pm)
The Director of Environmental Services entered the meeting. (7.31 pm)

8. Space Planning Project at Lagan Valley Island (Contd)
Presentation – W D & R T Taggart

The Chairman, Councillor O Gawith, extended a welcome to the undernoted representatives from W D & R T Taggart, the Council's consultants on the Space Planning Project at Lagan Valley Island:-

Mr Colin Shaw – Partner
Ms Alison Brown – Senior Architect

Mr Shaw thanked the Committee for the opportunity to address the meeting and, with the aid of PowerPoint, he and Ms Brown made a presentation in regard to the Space Planning Project at Lagan Valley Island.

The presentation focused on the following areas:-

- the outcome of a space utilization survey undertaken as part of the Council's development of an Estates Strategy;
- the nature of workstation usage identified in the space utilization survey;
- the purpose, objectives and brief of the Space Planning Project;
- key design objectives;
- timescale and programme for the Project to include consultation workshops with interested groups, including Elected Members;

During discussion, the Officers noted Members' comments about the need to centralise functions rather than having people working in satellite locations. However it was acknowledged that the requirement of work in satellite locations would remain. This issue along with other work-pattern issues such as agile working, were being examined.

Comments were also noted about the inclusion of the restaurant facility as an area that could be utilised as a working space. The Director of Environmental Services advised that – whilst the restaurant space could be an output of the Project, it would not be an input as the Council had already taken a decision to investigate its use as a restaurant/dining space.

After the officials had answered Members' questions, the Chairman thanked them for their attendance and informative presentation and they left the meeting (8.00 pm).

The Chief Executive and the Head of Technical & Estates left the meeting. (8.00 pm)

During further discussion, the Director of Environmental Services stated that - regardless of the restructuring of the Council and the potential for some change within existing directorates, the Space Planning Project was necessary so as to maximise the effective use of the Lagan Valley Island building and to allow for the return of services from Bradford Court.

The Director of Environmental Services left the meeting. (8.05 pm)

9. Reports of Director of Corporate Services (Continued)9.1 Consolidated Councillor Allowances Guidance

Members had been provided with copy of a letter dated the 14th December 2016 from the Department for Communities (Local Government Policy Division) relating to Local Government Circular 23/2016 which provided a set of consolidated guidance on councillor allowances. This circular superseded the previous guidance provided in Local Government Circular 04/2015 and associated addenda.

Members were asked to note that the circular prescribed as follows:-

- *“where councils have provided portable IT readable devices they should not provide hard copies of electronically available documents”*. Members were advised that currently all chairpersons receive hard copies of meeting papers as do all members of the Planning Committee.
- *“If councillors are availing of the HMRC Overseas Subsistence Rates these can be unreceipted.”* Members were advised that the Council uses the HMRC overseas subsistence rates and that receipts are required.

In regard to Councillors' Support Services which had been the subject of discussion over a number of months, Paragraph 9 of the circular had reminded of the increase in the Basic Allowances in part to cover office consumables and incidental costs incurred by councillors in their official capacity. It stated that *“It is for each council to decide if it should provide councillors with (a) any IT or mobile hardware, such as laptops or printers; and/or (b) broadband and mobile data, or cover all or part of the cost of these services, as required to carry out council duties. A decision to provide or cover any of these costs must be supported by a robust business case.”* In this regard, Members were provided with a business case for these provisions plus that of Smartphones.

It was agreed to recommend that:-

- Circular LG 23/2016 from the Local Government Policy Division which consolidated all Councillor allowances be noted;
- in regard to the provision of hard copies of electronically available documents to the chairpersons and to the members of the Planning Committee, that procedure continue so as ensure the smooth running of meetings;
- in regard to the payment of HMRC Overseas Subsistence Rates, the procedure whereby receipts are required to be produced for overseas subsistence continue so as to ensure transparency, good governance and sound financial controls;

9.1 Consolidated Councillor Allowances Guidance (Contd)

- the business case for the provision to all Elected Members of IT/mobile technology/mobile data support in the form of iPads with sim cards, air printers, smartphones and home broadband be approved with Members being responsible for the cost of any mobile calls/mobile data in excess of the Council mobile phone and iPad sim card tariffs.

The Director noted comments about Members:-

- being informed of what they would be provided with in terms of consumables under the above Circular;
- receiving refresher training in terms of the use of iPads, SharePoint etc.

Additional Report

9.2 Northern Ireland Local Government Association
Summary Product & Work Plan for 2017/2018
Subscription 2017/2018

Members had been provided with a copy of a letter dated the 9th January 2017 and attendant documentation from the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) regarding its Summary Product & Work Plan for 2017/2018, and also its Investment Breakdown for 2017/2018. Notification of the Council's calculated subscription for 2017/2018 was also detailed.

It was agreed to recommend that:-

- the Summary Product & Work Plan of the Northern Ireland Local Government Association for 2017/2018 be approved together with its Investment Breakdown for 2017/2018 and that NILGA be so advised by the 28th February 2017;
- the Council's subscription to the Northern Ireland Local Government Association for 2017/2018 be noted as £43,610 (excluding VAT) and be paid on receipt of an invoice expected on or after the 1st April 2017.

10. Confidential Report of Director of Corporate Services (Continued)

10.1 Corporate Services Department
Draft Estimates of Income & Expenditure for 2017/2018

The Chairman advised that the above item was confidential for reason of information that related to the financial or business affairs of the organisation.

10.1 Corporate Services Department
Draft Estimates of Income & Expenditure for 2017/2018 (Contd)

It was proposed by Councillor B Mallon, seconded by Councillor A McIntyre and agreed that the remaining item in the confidential report of the Director of Corporate Services, ie that in relation to the Draft Estimates, be considered “in Committee”, in the absence of members of the press and public being present.

The Committee had been provided with a report on the Draft Estimates of Income and Expenditure for the Corporate Services Department for 2017/2018.

The Director gave a verbal report on adjustments since the Special Meeting of the Committee along with the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the other Standing Committees which had taken place on the 12th December 2016.

On behalf of the Chairman of the Development Committee (Councillor U Mackin), Alderman A G Ewart proposed that the sum of £569,000.00 from the Department (related to the Transferring Functions Grant) be shown within the Planning & Building Control Unit’s Draft Estimates which are considered by the Development Committee. The proposal was seconded by Councillor S Carson. The proposal in the name of Alderman A G Ewart was put to the meeting and on a show of hands declared carried.

It was agreed to recommend that - subject to the decision recorded above in relation to the sum of £569,000.00 from the Department (related to the Transferring Functions Grant) being shown within the Planning & Building Control Unit’s Draft Estimates which are considered by the Development Committee - the Draft Estimates for Corporate Services as presented be accepted and be submitted into the overall Estimates of the Council for the year commencing the 1st April 2017.

The revised draft Estimates of Income & Expenditure for all Departments would be presented to a Special Meeting of the Corporate Services Committee on the 25th January 2017.

Item Reported Verbally

10.2 Dundonald International Ice Bowl Development
Visit to Dumfries & Galloway Council

The Director verbally reported that – arising from the last Away Day – it had been agreed to progress fact finding visits so as to assist in consideration of funding models that might be used in relation to the above project. As part of this, arrangements were being progressed for a visit to Dumfries & Galloway Council and the Political Group Leaders Forum had recommended that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Corporate Services Committee participate in this visit.

10.2 Dundonald International Ice Bowl Development (Contd)
Visit to Dumfries & Galloway Council

It was agreed to recommend that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (or their nominees) of the Corporate Services Committee participate in the fact finding visit to Dumfries & Galloway Council in relation to funding models for the above project, it being noted that travel to Scotland would be by means of ferry and that the intention would be to travel to and from in one day.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 Legacy Council VAT Rebates
Alderman D Drysdale

At the request of Alderman D Drysdale, the Head of Finance & IT gave an update on VAT rebates for the legacy councils which were being sought on a combined basis with other councils.

11.2 Local Business – Press coverage
Councillor John Palmer

Councillor John Palmer made reference to recent press coverage in relation to a local construction business.

It was proposed by Councillor A McIntyre, seconded by Councillor B Hanvey and agreed to come out of committee and normal business was resumed.

11.3 Former Mayor of Whanganui - Honours Award
Deputy Mayor, Alderman S Martin

The Deputy Mayor, Alderman S Martin, advised those present that a former Mayor of Whanganui, Annette Main, had been named an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the 2017 New Year Honours List. Ms Main had received the honour for her services to local government. Whanganui had a friendship link with the Council.

It was agreed that The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor R B Bloomfield, send a letter of congratulations to Ms Main.

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 8.45 pm.

MAYOR/CHAIRMAN