

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held in the Cherry Room, Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn on Wednesday 12th June 2019 at 6.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R Carlin (Chairman)
Alderman S P Porter (Vice Chairman)
Deputy Mayor, Councillor J McCarthy
Aldermen A G Ewart MBE and S Martin
Councillors S Carson, A P Ewing, M Guy, D Honeyford, S Hughes, J Lavery BEM, U Mackin, John Palmer, A Swan and N Trimble

OTHER MEMBERS: Councillor C McCready

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive
Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development
Head of Finance (Acting)
PSCP/Member Services Manager
Administration Manager
Head of Sports Services
Member Services Officer

Commencement of Meeting

The Chairman, Councillor R Carlin, extended a welcome to all present to the first Corporate Services Committee meeting of the new Council term. He then proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

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 The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Givan, Councillor J Gallen and Head of Business and Democratic 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. Councillor A P Ewing declared an interest in relation to Item 5.4.

3. Presentation from Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)
(Item 5.1 Refers)

The Chairman, Councillor R Carlin, welcomed Mr Derek McCallan, Chief Executive of NILGA to the meeting and advised the Committee that Mr McCallan was attending the meeting to discuss the specific achievements NILGA delivers for the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area.

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Members were provided with the following information:

- NILGA – ‘Who We Are’ and how NILGA operates;
- Themes and Drivers of NILGA’s work;
- Lobbying undertaken by the organisation;
- Training provided by NILGA to Elected Members and Council officers including learning networks;
- Benefits of Councils collectively working together to achieve the same goal;
- Policy Transformation;
- The challenges facing Local Government presently and those ahead; and
- The role that NILGA can have in developing Council’s Community Planning strategies.

At the end of the presentation, Mr McCallan advised Members that he and his colleagues would be available to meet with any Councillor to discuss any issues, if required.

The Chairman, Councillor R Carlin, thanked Mr McCallan for his informative presentation and for attending the meeting. Councillor Hon. N Trimble asked for more detail regarding the new Policy and Learning Networks and was advised that the new format had been developed with Councillors’ time commitments in mind along with engaging with stakeholders and ensuring that NILGA’s message was heard. Alderman S Martin informed the Committee that from personal experience, he believed that this new approach would be effective. Members agreed to note this presentation.

During the discussion of this item Councillor C McCready entered the meeting (at 6.21pm).

At the conclusion of this item Mr D McCallan and the PCSP/Members’ Services Manager left the meeting (at 6.30pm).

4. Report of Chief Executive

It was agreed to recommend that the report and recommendations of the Chief Executive be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below and other items noted.

4.1 Quarterly Performance

The Committee was provided with the quarterly performance and budget report for the Support Services Directorate. Members asked for further clarification regarding unanswered calls and were advised that there was ongoing work taking place with the Council's telephone provider regarding voice mail facilities and internal pick up groups. It was proposed by Councillor Hon N Trimble, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor J McCarthy and agreed that this item would be noted.

During the discussion of this item the PCSP/Members' Services Manager returned to the meeting (at 6.32pm).

4.2 "My Adopted Soldier" Project – USA Civil War Trip 2020

The Committee was advised that a request from the Director of the "My Adopted Soldier" project had been received, asking the Council to provide financial support to allow a local Year 12 student the opportunity to study a soldier born in Ireland who fought in the USA Civil War. This project would involve a field trip to America, with the group laying a wreath at the Irish Brigade Memorial at Gettysburg.

This same request has been made to a number of Councils within NI and the Chief Executive advised that different approaches to this request had been adopted by different Councils. The Chief Executive advised that this request in its current form did not meet the Council's policy for financial assistance.

The Vice Chairman, Alderman S P Porter, asked if a student from the local area had yet been identified and if any further information relating to this project had been submitted for the Committee's consideration. The Chief Executive advised that as yet, no student had been identified and the information provided in the report was all that had been received. Councillor U Mackin highlighted that the request asked the Council to support a student from its county but as the Council area partially spans three counties, the Council could potentially provide funding for a student who does not reside in the Council area. As part of this discussion, Members indicated that while this project may be very worthwhile, due to the lack of detailed information regarding it and its participants, the Committee was not able to make a judgement against the criteria outlined in the Financial Assistance Policy and therefore, the request in its current form should be declined.

It was proposed by Alderman S Martin, seconded by Councillor A Swan and agreed to recommend that the Director of this project be contacted and advised that this request could not be approved at this stage, but if a student from the

Council area was identified as a participant, then an application on behalf of that student could be submitted and reconsidered by the Committee. This application would require more detailed information and would be based on the understanding that while the Council may consider this application, there would be no guarantee that any financial assistance would be granted.

4.3 Disposal and Acquisition of Assets

The Committee considered a report regarding the disposal of the former Friends Meeting House, stables and adjacent land at Maghaberry Road, Maghaberry. During the consideration of this report, the Vice Chairman, Alderman S P Porter, queried the amount that the Development Committee agreed to ring fence in relation to the provision of a pedestrian crossing. The report stated that the amount was £20,000 but he believed it should indicate £25,000. The Chief Executive advised that the amount agreed was £20,000 but that as the Chairman of the Development Committee, Alderman A G Ewart, was present at its meeting, it was agreed that this figure could be revised.

It was proposed by the Vice Chairman, Alderman S P Porter, seconded by Councillor S Carson and agreed to recommend to approve the appointment of agents and legal representatives to take forward the disposal through the sale of this asset. It was further agreed that the figure of £20,000 of any sale receipts, be revised to a maximum amount of £25,000, would be ring fenced and put towards the installation of a pedestrian crossing within the village of Maghaberry.

Within in the same report, the Committee considered the recommendation made through the Development Committee in relation to Dromara Rural Village Renewal Project – Youth Initiative/Village Renewal Right of Way. It was proposed by the Vice Chairman, Alderman S P Porter, seconded by Councillor S Carson and agreed to recommend, that approval be granted to appoint legal representatives to take forward the following:

- Creation of a right of way for a footpath and access road for Dromara Primary School as per the attached map.
- Transfer of land from the Education Authority to the Council.
- Amend the Dromara Community Group lease to accommodate the proposed right of way as agreed.
- To enter into a licence agreement with the Education Authority to allow the Council's Contractor to carry out specified work on the Education Authority's land.

Verbal Report:

4.4 Issues relating to Off Site Car Parking at Lagan Valley Hospital

The Chief Executive advised the Committee that a number of Members had raised their concerns with Council Officers regarding the off-site car parking surrounding Lagan Valley Hospital. The Chief Executive suggested that this

issue be referred to the Health Working Group and with Members' agreement would be added to the next Health Working Group agenda.

5. Report of Head of Business and Democratic Services

In the absence of the Head of Business and Democratic Services, the PCSP/Members' Services Manager deputised and presented the below reports to the Committee.

It was agreed to recommend that the report and recommendations of the Head of Business and Democratic Services be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below and other items noted.

5.1 Presentation from NI Local Government Association (NILGA)

Members noted that this was dealt with earlier in the meeting under Item 3.

5.2 Protocol for Death of a Serving Member, Former Mayor and/or Freeman

It was agreed to recommend that the Protocol on the Death of a Serving Member, Former Mayor and/or Freeman be approved.

5.3 Committee Terms of Reference

Members were provided with updated Terms of Reference for Standing Committees which reflected the changes in Committee responsibilities following the recent organisational restructure.

During consideration of this report, Councillor John Palmer highlighted that the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor are listed as Ex-Officio Members of the Planning Committee, which is incorrect and asked that this be amended. Alderman S Martin asked that a consistent approach be adopted for example, reference is made to a Vice Chairman and a Deputy Chairman across the Terms of References.

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor J McCarthy, seconded by Alderman A G Ewart and agreed to recommend, subject to the amendments, the revised Terms of Reference for Committee be approved and appended to Standing Orders.

As part of this conversation, Alderman S P Porter highlighted that with the recent restructure of the organisation, the responsibilities of two Committees appear to have grown significantly, while others have decreased. Alderman S P Porter asked if this could be kept under review as the workload of the Committees should be more evenly spread.

5.4 Health Working Group Membership

Councillor A P Ewing declared a verbal interest in relation to this item as a member of the South Eastern Local Commissioning Group who work closely with this group.

It was proposed by Councillor John Palmer, seconded by Alderman A G Ewart and agreed to recommend that the Health Working Group be reconstituted as outlined in the report and that a full list of Membership be provided to the Committee in September 2019.

The Vice Chairman, Alderman S P Porter advised the Committee that as Vice Chairman he would be nominated to sit on the Health Working Group but due to a possible conflict of interest relating to Dunmurry Manor care home, which is an ongoing agenda item, it may provide a conflict of interest and therefore it would be more appropriate for someone else to be nominated in his place.

5.5 Appointments to Outside Bodies

The Committee considered a report regarding Council appointments to outside bodies and the responsibilities and legal liabilities that Members may be subject to as part of these appointments. Councillor John Palmer advised that Lough Neagh Partnership should be added to those listed in the report. He also highlighted that those appointed to the Board of Lagan Rural Partnership are listed as officers by Companies House and this should be examined also.

Alderman S Martin proposed, that given this would be the last Corporate Services Committee meeting before September, the recommendation be amended so that the report coming to the meeting in September includes a clear recommendation regarding the Council nominating to these external bodies, allowing this issue to be progressed more quickly.

It was proposed by Councillor Hon N Trimble, seconded by Alderman S Martin and agreed that subject to these amendments, the Council receive legal advice regarding this issue and that an updated report be presented at the September Corporate Services Committee meeting.

5.6 Fly the Red Ensign for Merchant Navy Day

It was proposed by Alderman A G Ewart, seconded by Councillor A P Ewing and agreed to recommend that the Council participates in Merchant Navy Day on Tuesday 3rd September 2019 and hold an associated reception.

5.7 Retrospectively Approve Expense for Members' Attendance at Events

It was proposed by the Vice Chairman, Alderman S P Porter, seconded by Councillor S Carson and agreed to recommend that Council retrospectively approve expenses for Members who attended the Ulster Defence Regiment CGC Belfast County's Annual Church Service on Sunday 19th May 2019 and

Belfast City Council's reception to Welcome Key Chinese Business, Tourism and Media Leader on Tuesday 28th May 2019.

5.8 Annual Battle of the Somme Remembrance Parade and Service, Knockagh War Memorial, Carrickfergus

Members considered correspondence received from Mid & East Antrim Borough Council inviting all Elected Members to attend the annual Battle of the Somme Remembrance Parade and Service at Knockagh War Memorial, Carrickfergus on Sunday 30th May 2019. It was proposed by Councillor A P Ewing, seconded by Councillor Hon. N Trimble and agreed to recommend that the attendance of any Member who wishes to attend be approved, that Council robes be worn at this event and that a wreath be laid at the memorial on behalf of the Council. It was further agreed that Member Services would make arrangements on behalf of those wishing to attend.

Additional Report:

5.9 Personal Items of Stationery for Elected Members – Bi-Lingual Translation

The Committee was informed that a request had been received for a Member's personal details to appear in Irish on that Member's stationery. As the current Council position does not cover this request, Members were asked to give further consideration to this position.

After a discussion, it was proposed by Councillor D Honeyford, seconded by Councillor Hon. N Trimble and agreed to recommend that a bi-lingual option for inclusion on Members' personal stationery items only be approved and where this has been requested, that English remains as the primary language. It was further agreed, that as outlined in the report, the individual Member requesting a second language must provide the translation which will not be checked by the Council for accuracy.

6. Report of Head of Finance (Acting)

It was agreed to recommend that the report and recommendations of the Head of Finance (Acting) be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below and other items noted.

6.1 Financial Transactions Performance in 2018/19 Financial Year

The Committee was provided with the Financial Transactions performance for the Financial Year 2018/2019 and information was provided regarding bank reconciliations, sales ledger and debtors and creditors (prompt payment). It was proposed by Councillor Hon. N Trimble, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor J McCarthy and agreed to note this report.

6.2 Amendments to Guidance on Councillor Allowances

Members were furnished with a copy of Addendum No 2 to circular LG 23/2016 from the Local Government & Housing Regulation Divisions of the Department for Communities, which provided guidance relating to the withholding of Councillor Allowances. The Committee was advised that the Council's Scheme of Allowance would be updated to reflect this guidance. It was agreed to note this update.

7. Report of Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development

It was agreed to recommend that the report and recommendations of the Head of Human Resource & Organisation Development (HR&OD) be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below and other items noted.

7.1 Efficiency Review Steering Group

The Committee was advised that in the previous Council term, an Efficiency Review Steering Group had been established which consisted of Elected Members and attended by relevant Council officers. In order to progress the work within the timeline for creating efficiencies, the Party Group Leaders' Forum agreed to nominate Members to this group which allowed a meeting to be held on 5th June 2019. Councillor Hon. N Trimble advised the Committee that it had been agreed that if a nominee was unable to attend a particular meeting, it was acceptable for the party to send another representative.

It was proposed by Councillor S Carson, seconded by Councillor Hon. N Trimble and agreed to recommend that the Council retrospectively approve the reconstitution of the Efficiency Review Steering Group for the current Council term and that it continues its work in line with the previously agreed governance arrangements.

7.2 Elected Member Development Steering Group

The Committee was advised that in October 2015, it was agreed that an Elected Member Development Steering Group be established and Members were provided with the Group's Scope and Terms of Reference. Members were advised that the Group wanted to work towards achieving 'Charter Plus' status of the Elected Member Development Charter.

It was proposed by Alderman A G Ewart, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor J McCarthy and agreed to recommend that the Elected Member Development Steering Group be reconstituted for this Council term and that Party Leaders be contacted seeking nominations to this Group, with a full list of Membership being provided at the September Corporate Services Committee meeting.

7.3 Investors in People

The Committee was informed that the Council had been successful in achieving Investors in People Silver status in 2017 and that the Council wanted to work towards achieving the Investors in People Gold Standard. It was proposed by Councillor Hon. N Trimble, seconded by Councillor S Carson and agreed to recommend that the Council agree the activities and timeline as outlined in the report, including to 'bolt on' the Health and Wellbeing Award.

8. Confidential Report of Chief Executive

The Chairman advised that the reasons for confidentiality were as set out in the agenda, i.e.

8.1 Update on Leasing Bradford Court

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

8.2 Insurance Premium

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

8.3 Proposed Amendments to Special Responsibility Allowance –

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

8.4 Chief Executive Appraisal

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

8.5 Workforce Reports

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

8.6 Recruitment of Posts: Leisure and Community Wellbeing

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

8.7 Shared Cost Pension Contribution

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

8.8 Minutes of Efficiency Review Steering Group

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

In Committee

It was proposed by Councillor A P Ewing, seconded by Councillor A Swan, and agreed that the Confidential Report of the Chief Executive be considered “in Committee”, in the absence of members of the press and public.

It was agreed that the Confidential Report and recommendations of the Chief Executive be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below and other items noted.

8.1 Update on Leasing Bradford Court

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor J McCarthy, seconded by Councillor U Mackin and agreed to recommend to Council that the Chief Executive be granted delegated authority, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to guide the appointed Estate Agent in developing a draft Heads of Terms and a draft lease for final agreement by the Committee in the autumn.

8.2 Insurance Premium

During consideration of this item, Alderman S Martin asked for additional clarification to be sought in relation to the cover provided under Legal Expenses (Councillors Code of Conduct) Insurance Premium and it was agreed that this information would be provided to the Member. It was proposed by Alderman S Martin, seconded by Alderman A G Ewart and agreed to recommend that the insurance renewal premiums for the year commencing 1st April 2019 be approved.

8.3 Proposed Amendments to Special Responsibility Allowance

As previously requested by the Committee, Members were provided with a number of options regarding the allocation of Special Responsibility Allowance. During the consideration of the three options outlined in the report, a fourth option was discussed that allowed for a temporary arrangement to be considered, so that a permanent solution could be agreed on commencing in next financial year. After a show of hands, it was proposed by Councillor J Laverty, seconded by Councillor Hon. N Trimble and agreed that the Chief Executive would take a report to Council detailing the outcome of the show of hands, being option 1 – 3 votes, option 2 – 0 votes, option 3 – 7 votes and option 4 – 3 votes.

During the discussion of this item, the PCSP/Member Services Manager left and returned to the meeting at 7.30pm and 7.32pm respectively.

8.4 Chief Executive Appraisal

The Chief Executive left the meeting (at 7.51pm) for the duration of this item and the Head of HR & OD presented this report.

It was proposed by Alderman S Martin, seconded by Councillor Hon. N Trimble and agreed to recommend that a working group be established to progress the Chief Executive's appraisal and that this group consist of a representative from each of the Parties (of 2 or more Elected Members), with the largest Party's representative acting as Chairman. It was agreed that the Head of HR & OD approach Party Leaders for nominees and then provide the necessary training for these Members as outlined in the report.

The Head of Finance (Acting) left the meeting at 7.51pm.

8.5 Workforce Reports

The Chief Executive returned to the meeting (at 7.58pm).

During the discussion of this item, Members welcomed the continued improvement in regards to the absence figures. It was proposed by Alderman A G Ewart, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor J McCarthy and agreed to recommend that this report be noted.

8.6 Recruitment of Posts: Leisure and Community Wellbeing

It was proposed by Councillor A P Ewing, seconded by Councillor Hon. N Trimble and agreed to recommend that the proposed revised staffing structure for Lagan Valley Regional Park be approved. It was further agreed to recommend that the post of Health and Wellbeing Officer within Sports Services be made permanent.

8.7 Shared Cost Pension Contribution

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor J McCarthy, seconded by Councillor J Laverty and agreed to recommend that the buy-back of pension for a Council employee through a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contribution (SCAPC) be approved.

8.8 Minutes of the Efficiency Review Steering Group

It was proposed by Councillor Hon. N Trimble, seconded by Councillor A Swan and agreed to recommend that the minutes of the Efficiency Review Steering Group, following its meeting on 5th June 2019, be approved.

It was further agreed to recommend, as outlined in the report, that approval be given to progress discussions with relevant post holders to establish an agreed release of officers, where there is no suitable alternative employment identified, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Verbal Item:

8.9 Staffing in Confidence

Councillor S Carson asked to discuss a HR issue while 'in committee' with the Head of HR & OD and the following staff left the meeting (at 8.06pm) - The Chief Executive, PCSP/Members' Services Manager, Administration Manager, Head of Sports Services and Members' Services Officer.

The Chief Executive was invited back into the meeting (at 8.08pm).

During this discussion, Members raised a number of questions with the Head of HR & OD and the Chief Executive and once concluded, it was agreed that normal business could resume and staff could return to the meeting.

The PCSP/Members' Services Manager, Administration Manger and Member Services Officer returned to the meeting (at 8.15pm).

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor Hon. N Trimble, seconded Councillor A P Ewing, and agreed to come "out of Committee" and normal business was resumed.

9. Any Other Business

9.1 Record of Thanks – Mrs Carmel Connolly
Vice Chairman, Alderman S P Porter

The Vice Chairman, Alderman S P Porter, took this opportunity to offer his sincere thanks to the Head of Business and Democratic Services, Mrs Carmel Connolly, on behalf of the Committee, who was retiring at the end of the month. He further commented on the hard work provided by her and her team in organising the Council's civic events and her relationship with the Lord Lieutenants. The Vice Chairman, Alderman S P Porter, told the Committee a story about how he had been approached by a Mayor from another Council seeking advice on how to organise a Freedom of the City event as successfully as Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, which was testament to Mrs Connolly's diligent work and effort. The other Committee Members echoed their thanks to Mrs Connolly for her years of service and wished her all the best in her future endeavours.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.18pm.

MAYOR/CHAIRMAN