

**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> April 2021 at 6.00 pm.**

**PRESENT IN COUNCIL CHAMBER:**

Alderman S Martin (Acting Chairman)  
Alderman W J Dillon MBE  
Councillors U Mackin and A Swan

**PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION:**

The Right Worshipful The Mayor  
Councillor The Hon. Nicholas Trimble  
Aldermen A G Ewart MBE and O Gawith  
Councillors R Carlin, S Carson, A P Ewing, S Hughes, J Lavery BEM, S Lowry, J McCarthy and John Palmer

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION:**

Alderman A Grehan  
Councillor S Lee

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive (Remote)  
Director of Finance & Corporate Services  
Director of Service Transformation (Remote)  
Head of Corporate Communications & Administration (Remote)  
Head of Finance (Remote)  
Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development (Remote)  
Head of Sports Services (Remote)  
Portfolio Manager (Remote)  
IT Manager (Remote)  
Acting Member Services/PCSP Manager  
IT Officer  
Events Technician  
Member Services Officer

**Chairman**

In the absence of the Chairman of the Committee, Alderman S P Porter, due to illness, the meeting was chaired by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Alderman S Martin. Alderman Martin advised that Alderman Porter was recuperating after minor surgery and extended best wishes to him for a speedy recovery back to full health.

### Commencement of Meeting

The Acting Chairman, Alderman S Martin, extended a welcome to all present at the meeting and advised that it was being live-streamed to enable members of the public to both hear and see the proceedings.

The names of those Elected Members who were in attendance at the meeting, both in person and on a remote basis, were read out by the Acting Member Services Manager.

The Acting Chairman stated that, whilst the meeting was being live-streamed, unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per 8.5 of the Council's Standing Orders. The Acting Chairman also reminded everyone to ensure that mobile phones were turned off or on silent mode for the duration of the meeting.

The Acting Chairman proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency. Finally the Acting Chairman 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.

### His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh

At this point in proceedings, the Acting Chairman referred to the recent passing of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh. As a mark of respect for Prince Philip and in recognition of the official period of mourning, those in attendance at the meeting were invited to stand and observe a minute's silence.

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of Alderman S P Porter (Chairman of the Committee) and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Jenny Palmer.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

The Acting 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 with the papers for the meeting and which were also available in the Chamber.

The following declaration was made:-

- Councillor U Mackin - Item 2 of Report of Director of Finance & Corporate Services – Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) Annual Investment & Delivery Programme and Subscription Fee for 2021/2022 – Member of NILGA Executive.

3. Report of Director of Finance & Corporate Services

3.1 Disability Action Plan

Members had been provided with a draft of the Council's Disability Action Plan for 2021-2025.

It was proposed by Councillor U Mackin, seconded by Councillor A Swan and agreed to recommend that the draft of the Council's Disability Action Plan for 2021-2025 be agreed and that it be issued for public consultation (to include focused consultation with disabled groups) and submission to the Equality Commission as a consultative draft.

3.2 Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) Annual Investment & Delivery Programme and Subscription Fee for 2021/2022

Members had been provided with copy of a letter dated the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021 from NILGA in regard to its annual investment and delivery programme for 2021/2022 and the Council's annual subscription.

The Director advised that – subsequent to the issue of the papers for the meeting – a communication had been received from NILGA which explained the increase in subscription fee. In addition to a subscription revenue increase, changes in banding in terms of population statistics had also resulted in an increase.

Alderman W J Dillon expressed concern about the reasons for the increase in the NILGA subscription fee and enquired as to when NILGA had taken such a decision for the increase. The Director referenced the communication from NILGA and key issues.

Councillor John Palmer – the Council's representative on the Partnership Panel – considered that the work of that Panel was progressing well.

It was proposed by Councillor S Lowry, seconded by Alderman O Gawith and agreed to recommend that:-

- the Annual Investment & Delivery Programme of NILGA for 2021/2022 be approved;
- the Council's subscription fee to NILGA for 2021/2022 in the sum of £51,259.00 be approved and be paid on receipt of the associated invoice expected after the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

### 3.3 Key Performance Indicators

The Quarterly Monitoring document for Service Support for Quarter 3 covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> October – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 had been provided to Members for consideration and scrutiny. A summary of the KPI targets was also provided within the narrative of the report. The Director highlighted the significant training that had been undertaken, especially in the realm of IT. Officers also provided reasons as to why certain targets had not been achieved, this being due to the timelines put in place pre-Covid and then Covid having had an adverse effect thereon.

It was proposed by Councillor A Swan, seconded by Alderman W J Dillon and agreed to recommend that the Key Performance Indicators for Service Support for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 be accepted.

### 3.4 Committee for Justice of Northern Ireland Assembly Call for Evidence – Damages (Return on Investment) Bill (Closing date: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021)

Members had been provided with copy of a letter dated the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021 from the Committee for Justice of the NI Assembly seeking comment on the “Damages (Return on Investment) Bill by the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Copy of a draft response prepared by the Acting Member Services/PCSP Manager had also been provided.

It was proposed by Councillor U Mackin, seconded by Alderman A G Ewart and agreed to recommend that the draft response of the Acting Member Services/PCSP Manager to the above consultation be accepted as the Council’s response thereto and be submitted to the Committee for Justice by the stipulated closing date.

## 4. Report of Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development

### 4.1 Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees – Revised Code

Members were advised that the above Code had been revised by a working group of officers from local government, Department for Communities, the Local Government Staff Commission and the trade unions. Subsequent to its agreement by the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC), the Code had been promulgated under the authority of the LGSC and issued as a statutory recommendation for adoption by all councils and the Commission.

A copy of the Code and the schedule of amendments to it had been provided with the Head of Service’s report.

4.1 Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees – Revised Code  
(Continued)

It was proposed by Councillor John Palmer, seconded by Councillor S Lowry and agreed to recommend that the statutory recommendation as contained in the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees be agreed.

It was noted that appropriate communications and LMS training would be provided to all staff.

In response to comments about a previous decision to dissolve the LGSC, the Director reported that this body required to be dissolved by statute and until a number of LGSC projects were complete, that would not happen.

5. Report of Head of Corporate Communications & Administration

5.1 Protocol for the Operation of the Planning Committee

The above item was presented by the Director of Service Transformation.

Members were advised that a revised Protocol for the operation of the Planning Committee had been considered by a workshop of that Committee in November 2020. Following further deliberations by the Planning Committee and taking account of comments made following consultation with all Members of Council, a revised protocol had been finalised and was circulated with the Head of Service's report. The main changes to the Protocol were set out in the report.

It was proposed by Councillor S Carson, seconded by Alderman O Gawith and agreed that:-

- the additional amendments recommended in regard to the Protocol following discussions in March 2021 which had taken account of the comments of the wider corporate body of Elected Members be accepted;
- the Protocol be accepted and – subject to Council ratification on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021 – be effective as from the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2021.

Alderman O Gawith (Chairman of the Planning Committee) thanked the Director of Service Transformation, the Head of Planning & Capital Development and their staff for the work associated with the drafting of the revised Protocol.

5.1 Protocol for the Operation of the Planning Committee (Continued)

In response to Members' questions, the Director of Service Transformation confirmed that:-

- "valid planning reasons" were not confined to policies;
- information about "valid reasons" would be shared with all Members;
- planning policies were available on SharePoint and the Planning Unit could supply any other information/advice that may be required;
- Member training for the new planning policy would be delivered via the Members' Development Programme.

Alderman A G Ewart left the meeting during discussion of this item. (6.32 pm)  
The Director of Service Transformation left the meeting at the conclusion of this item of business. (6.45 pm)

5.2 Somme Pilgrimage 2021

The Head of Service reported extensively on discussions in regards to the Council's representation at the Somme Pilgrimage in France/Belgium in June/July 2021 in light of the current worldwide Pandemic and decisions of the Council in regard to "mass" gatherings in excess of 500 persons.

This matter had also been discussed by the Corporate Management Team and the Party Group Leaders Forum.

It was proposed by Councillor S Carson, seconded by Councillor A Swan and agreed to recommend that:-

- Members and Officers do not attend the 105<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Somme in France on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021.
- Council writes to the Somme Association to advise that it continues to support the Somme commemoration but will not be travelling this year due to COVID restrictions.
- Council marks the commemoration by attending the Royal British Legion Act of Remembrance on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 at the cenotaph in Lisburn where the Mayor will lay a wreath on behalf of the Council and residents of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

In regard to the Council's representation at the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ulster Tower in November 2021, the Committee noted that this matter would be kept under review with a further report to Committee in due course.

5.2 Somme Pilgrimage 2021 (Continued)

In response to comments made by Councillor S Carson, the Director acknowledged his comments that - due to Covid-19 – Members had not been able to attend the Somme Pilgrimage and the fact that 2022 would be the last opportunity to attend in this Council term. The Director stated that this matter was something that she was aware of and that it could be reconsidered as part of the budget setting process for 2022/2023 and there was work ongoing in relation to other Council events (Ulster Tower).

In response to comments regarding the Somme commemoration at Knockagh Monument, the Director agreed to contact the lead Council regarding this matter to learn of their proposals for the 2021 ceremony.

5.3 Committee for Justice of Northern Ireland Assembly  
Consultation - "Protection from Stalking Bill"  
(Closing date: 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021)

Further to the previous meeting of the Committee, comments for consideration in the Council's response to the above Bill were set out in the Head of Service's report.

It was proposed by Councillor John Palmer, seconded by Councillor S Lowry and agreed that:-

- the comments as set out in the Head of Service's report in relation to the above Bill be accepted and be used as a basis of the Council's response thereto;
- in line with the authority delegated by the Council on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 for the Committee to finalise the response, it be so submitted to the Committee for Justice by the stipulated closing date of the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Councillor S Lee left the meeting at conclusion of this item. (6.53 pm)

5.4 NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day

Members had been provided with copy of a communication dated the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 from the Public Sector Network (PSN) outlining a campaign to support an NHS Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day event on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021 which would be organised by the Pageantmaster, Bruno Peek.

A number of events were planned for the 5<sup>th</sup> July and these were detailed in the Head of Service's report. Two of these – the raising of a specially commissioned flag – and a Two Minute Silence/Playing the Last Post and Reveille, could be delivered within existing budgets as part of the Council's Civic Events Plan for 2021.

5.4 NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day (Continued)

It was proposed by Alderman W J Dillon, seconded by Councillor S Hughes and agreed to recommend that:-

- the Council participate in the two events detailed in the report for NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers Day on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021, ie raising of the "NHS, Social Care & Frontline Workers' Day" flag (10.00 am) and a two minute silence and playing of the Last Post and Reveille (11.00 am);
- the Council register the above events with NHS Frontline Day;
- the above events be added to the Council's annual calendar of civic events.

Members noted that the Civic Events Team would liaise with the Mayor of the Day regarding specific involvement in other recommended activities eg visiting a garden party as well as promotion of other planned events scheduled as part of the national programme.

Members also noted that the Council remained committed to holding a Freedom of the City event for the NHS which would be held at a future point in time when there was more certainty regarding gatherings.

The Director noted comments made by Aldermen W J Dillon and O Gawith about the remuneration payment of £500 to NHS staff, some members of that service having expressed the view that vocal expressions of their service was appreciated but the tangible appreciation in terms of the £500.00 remuneration would be very welcome as it remained outstanding. In addition to this, staff of the NHS had stated that – regardless of the Pandemic which had just served to strengthen the case – what the NHS really needed was additional funding and resources.

It was proposed by Alderman W J Dillon, seconded by Alderman O Gawith and agreed to recommend that the Minister of Health be asked to:-

- expedite the payment of £500.00 to the NHS staff which he had announced in January 2021;
- put in place sufficient funding and resources to enable the Health Care sector to work effectively and efficiently.

In relation to the remuneration of £500.00 to NHS staff, Councillor S Hughes stated that there would be a number of Government departments involved in this (including Westminster ones) and that would be contributing to the hold-up in its issue.



### 5.5 Light-up of Council Offices - Requests

Members were advised of the receipt of requests for the Council offices to be lit as follows:-

- from the All-Party Group on Fairtrade for the Council offices to be lit in yellow, blue and black on the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2021 to mark World Fairtrade Day;
- from “Brain Injury Matters” for the Council offices to be lit in green on the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021 to mark “Action for Brain Injury Week”.

It was proposed by Councillor A Swan, seconded by Councillor J McCarthy and agreed to recommend that the requests referred to above be acceded to, it being noted that the Fairtrade illumination would be on the basis of single colour rotation.

In addition to the above, Members noted receipt of a request from the Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council for the Council offices to be lit in rainbow colours on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2021 to mark the second anniversary of the murder of Lyra McKee. The Director noted Members’ comments about the above request and - in response - confirmed that this request (like the other two set out above) had – due to timelines – been considered under the previous policy.

It was proposed by Councillor A Swan, seconded by Councillor J McCarthy and agreed that the request referred to above be acceded to, it being noted that this light-up would be in single colour rotation. Furthermore the Committee decision would not be able to be ratified by Council as it was scheduled to be in advance of the Council meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

### 5.6 NI Centenary Working Group – Minutes of Meetings

It was agreed to recommend that the minutes of meetings of the NI Centenary Working Group held on the 14<sup>th</sup> January and 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 be noted.

The Chairman of the Working Group – Councillor S Carson – referred to a very interesting and successful virtual event held the previous evening from Lisburn Museum at which Dr Éamon Phoenix had delivered a talk on “Partition and the Birth of Northern Ireland 1900-22”. This talk was part of the Council’s NI Centenary Programme.

Councillor U Mackin commended the Working Group on their work in this regard and extended congratulations on the Council’s successful application to the Shared History Fund.

5.6 NI Centenary Working Group – Minutes of Meetings (Continued)

Councillor Carson updated Members on the Community Grant Fund and advised that this matter was being considered by the Leisure & Community Development Committee on the 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

5.7 Lisburn & Castlereagh Policing & Community Safety Partnership

It was agreed to recommend that the minutes of the following meetings of the Lisburn & Castlereagh PCSP be noted:-

- Private Meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021
- Policing Committee held on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021

6. Agenda Item Brought Forward  
Any Other Business

As the remainder of the business before the meeting was of a confidential nature, the Acting Chairman sought agreement to bring forward Item 7 of the agenda – Any Other Business – so that items of a non-confidential nature might be raised when the Committee was in Live Stream. This was agreed.

7. Any Other Business

7.1 Telephony System at Lagan Valley Island  
Alderman W J Dillon

Alderman W J Dillon sought an update on the upgrade to the telephony system at Lagan Valley Island as he considered the current one to be ineffective. Alderman Dillon cited one instance experienced by him recently.

The Director confirmed that she was discussing this matter with a number of officers later in the week in an effort to resolve problems associated with the telephony system. The Director asked that Alderman Dillon provide her staff with further information in relation to the issue referred to above so that she might have it investigated.

The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor N Trimble, left the meeting during this item. (7.17 pm)

7.2 Signage for Toilet facilities for the disabled  
Councillor S Lowry

In response to comments from Councillor S Lowry, the Director confirmed that new signage for toilets for the disabled (both visible and non-visible disabilities) had been erected at Lagan Valley Island and were in the process of being erected in other Council facilities.

8. Confidential Report from Director of Finance & Corporate Services

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

8.1 Business Continuity Policy and Corporate Business Continuity Plan  
(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the Council holding that information.)

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

8.3 IT Strategy Refresh 2020/2023  
(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the Council holding that information.)

8.4 Recruitment of Post: Vitality and Activity Programme Co-Ordinator  
(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 of, or office holders under, the Council.

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

8.6 Management Accounts – Period 11  
(Confidential for reason of 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 Swan, seconded by Councillor A P Ewing and agreed that the Confidential Report of the Director be considered “in Committee”. (The live-stream was paused at this stage in proceedings.)

8.1 Business Continuity Policy and Corporate Business Continuity Plan

Presented by the Director of Finance & Corporate Services.

It was proposed by Alderman W J Dillon, seconded by Councillor U Mackin and agreed to recommend that the revisions to the Business Continuity Policy and the Corporate Business Continuity Plan be noted.

It was further agreed that the provision of the Policy and Plan on the Council’s website following Council ratification be looked at.

## 8.2 Procurement of a Finance System

Presented by the Head of Finance.

It was proposed by Alderman O Gawith, seconded by Councillor S Lowry and agreed to recommend that:-

- the Revenue expenditure contained within the PIRSOC (Project Initiation Request and Strategic Outline Case) for the procurement of a Finance System over the five-year period be agreed;
- the Outline Business Case for the Finance System be approved, it being noted that fixed term resources of a Project Manager and a Project Support Assistant for a period of approximately 18 months were included in the Outline Business Case.

It was noted that - following approval, this proposal would be presented to the Capital Projects Committee for approval of the Outline Business Case capital budget.

## 8.3 IT Strategy Refresh 2020/2023

Presented by the Director of Finance & Corporate Services and supported by the Portfolio Manager and the IT Manager.

Alderman W J Dillon left and returned to the meeting during discussion and prior to any decision being taken. (7.50 pm and 7.57 pm respectively.)

It was proposed by Councillor A Swan, seconded by Alderman W J Dillon and agreed to recommend that the PIRSOC (Project Initiation Request and Strategic Outline Case) for the new IT Strategy as part of the Capital Investment Programme be agreed. This is part of the work being progressed under the Digital Council Pillar of the Council's Digital & Innovation Strategy.

It was noted that the Business Case for the IT Strategy Refresh would be presented to the appropriate Committee in due course.

## 8.4 Recruitment of Post: Vitality and Activity Programme Co-Ordinator

Presented by the Director of Finance & Corporate Services supported by the Head of HR & Organisation Development and the Head of Sports Services.

It was proposed by Councillor A Swan, seconded by Councillor A P Ewing and agreed to recommend that a Vitality and Activity Programme Co-Ordinator be recruited for a fixed-term period of two years.

8.4 Recruitment of Post: Vitality and Activity Programme Co-Ordinator  
(Continued)

The Head of Sports Services agreed to provide Councillor Ewing with attendance figures for virtual classes, a brief outline of these having been provided at the meeting.

The Head of Sports Services left the meeting at the conclusion of this item of business. (8.02 pm)

8.5 Earmarking Reserves

Presented by the Head of Finance.

It was proposed by Councillor John Laverty, seconded by Councillor John Palmer and agreed to recommend that approval be granted for the earmarking/transfer of the various reserves as detailed in the Head of Finance's report.

The committee also noted the content of a letter dated the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 from the Department for Communities advising of the funding support awarded to the Council in March 2021.

8.6 Management Accounts - Period 11

Presented by the Head of Finance.

It was agreed to recommend that the Management Accounts for the period ending the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021 be noted.

9. Any Other Business - Confidential

9.1 Insurances  
Councillor J Laverty

In response to comments from Councillor J Laverty about information on the Council's insurances, the Director advised that such information would be included in the Items for Noting schedule which would be issued later in the month.

The Director also noted comments made by Councillor John Palmer that on occasions it may be more appropriate for correspondence to be included in Committee reports as opposed to the Items for Noting schedules.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Alderman W J Dillon, seconded by Councillor A Swan and agreed to come “out of Committee”. Normal business and the live-stream were resumed.

Alderman W J Dillon commended Alderman S Martin for the manner by which he had conducted the meeting and - there being no further business - the meeting concluded at 8.15 pm.

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MAYOR/CHAIRMAN