

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Council held in the Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn, on Tuesday, 27 October 2015 at 7:00 pm

PRESENT:

The Right Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor R T Beckett

Deputy Mayor, Councillor A Redpath

Aldermen W J Dillon MBE, D Drysdale, A G Ewart,
M Henderson MBE, T Jeffers, W A Leathem, S Martin,
S P Porter and J Tinsley

Councillors N Anderson, J Baird, B Bloomfield MBE,
R Butler, S Carson, A P Ewing, J Gallen, O Gawith,
A Girvin, A Givan, A Grehan, B Harvey, V Kamble,
J McCarthy, A McIntyre, U Mackin, T Mitchell, T Morrow,
Jenny Palmer, John Palmer, L Poots, S Scott, M Tolerton
and R Walker

IN ATTENDANCE:

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Chief Executive
Director of Corporate Services
Director of Development and Planning
Director of Leisure and Community Services
Director of Environmental Services
Director of Finance
Transition Manager
IT Officer
Committee Secretary
Attendance Clerk

Commencement of the Meeting

At the commencement of the meeting, The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor R T Beckett, having welcomed those present to the meeting, advised that the proceedings of the meeting were being recorded.

Prayers

At the invitation of The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor R T Beckett, Pastor Jimmy Ritchie, Hillsborough Elim Pentecostal Church, addressed the Council and said a prayer. Pastor Ritchie expressed condolences in respect of the following recent bereavements and prayed for the families of the deceased:-

- Mr Crossley Mussen, former employee in the Environmental Health Unit of Lisburn Borough Council
- Ms Fiona Bate, Swimming Teacher at Lagan Valley LeisurePlex, whose mother, Mrs Mary Green, passed away on 26 October 2015

Pastor Ritchie also remembered in prayer, Councillor Janet Gray, following her recent surgery.

1. Business of The Right Worshipful the Mayor

The Right Worshipful the Mayor outlined the engagements he had attended during the month as follows:

- Service of Remembrance at St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, for the Royal Irish Regiment
- Mayor's Charity Table Quiz on Thursday 22 October 2015. The Right Worshipful the Mayor congratulated Councillor A Girvin on his team having won the quiz
- meeting with the American Consulate General, Dan Lawton, at the memorial in Maghaberry, along with Alderman James Tinsley. The Right Worshipful the Mayor advised that the American Consulate General had been unable to attend the official opening of the memorial. The Right Worshipful the Mayor thanked Alderman J Tinsley for having taken the time to meet with the Consulate General on this occasion.
- Prize Day ceremonies at Wallace High School, Lisnagarvey High School and Friends School Lisburn. The Right Worshipful the Mayor congratulated all schools concerned for their academic achievements.
- 30th anniversary dinner for the Confederation of Small Businesses at Titanic Quarter, Belfast
- rededication service in St Aidans Parish Church, Glenavy, to mark the completion of the extension to the church hall
- Anahilt craft fair, Hillsborough

1. Business of The Right Worshipful the Mayor (Cont'd)

- Annual dinner of Crewe United Football Club, along with Members of the Leisure Services Committee
- Official opening of the new premises of Ironside Trophies. The Right Worshipful the Mayor welcomed the success of this small business
- Health fair event in the Lisburn Library, "Teenage Kicks," for local schools. The Right Worshipful the Mayor welcomed the stand by Disability Sport at this event at which he had met Ms Bethany Firth, a Paralympic gold medal winner (swimming). The Mayor commended the work of Disability Sport as so many people benefited from the work of this charity.
- Attendance at the annual National Malaya and Borneo Veteran Association wreath laying ceremony at Lagan Valley Island on Saturday 3 October 2015 when a wreath had also been laid in memory of Professor Frank Pantridge. The Right Worshipful the Mayor thanked Council Officers and all who had attended this event.
- The Right Worshipful the Mayor referred to the success of the Council in winning its first trophy – the Bruce Mulligan Golf Cup. The Right Worshipful the Mayor thanked Members and Council staff for their help and support during this golf tournament, in particular the Chairman of the Leisure and Community Development Committee.

2. Apologies

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of Alderman G Rice MBE, Councillors P Catney, J Gray MBE, H Legge and B Mallon.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare conflicts of interest and to complete Declaration of Conflict of Interest forms in this regard. The following Declarations of Conflicts of Interest were declared:

- Alderman S P Porter declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of item 9.4 "Lifeline Public Consultation by Public Health Agency" due to his membership of the Public Health Agency
- Councillor A P Ewing declared an interest in respect of item 9.4 "Lifeline Public Consultation by Public Health Agency" due to his membership of the South Eastern Local Commissioning Group

3. Declarations of Interest (Cont'd)

- The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor R T Beckett, declared an interest in item 5.10 in the Minutes of the Corporate Services Committee Meeting of 13 October 2015 "Mary Peters Trust 40th Anniversary Dinner, Belfast City Hall," due to the Mary Peters Trust being the Mayor Beckett's Mayoral Charity

During the course of the meeting declaration forms were completed in respect of the following declarations:

- Alderman S Martin – in respect of item 4.6 of the Minutes of the Governance & Audit Committee of 13 October 2015 "Independent Review of NILGA" due to his membership of NILGA's Executive Committee, being Chair of NILGA's Elected Member Development Committee and also being a member of the Local Government Training Group
- Councillor U Mackin – in respect of item 4.6 of the Minutes of the Governance & Audit Committee of 13 October 2015 "Independent Review of NILGA" due to his membership of NILGA's Executive Committee
- Councillor U Mackin – in respect of item 4.2 of the Minutes of the Governance & Audit Committee of 13 October 2015 "Special Meeting of the Governance & Audit Committee – 27 October 2015 (in particular the item relating to the approval of accounts for the Lagan Rural Partnership for the year ended 31 March 2015)" in view of his membership of the Lagan Rural Partnership

4. Council Minutes

Alderman D Drysdale and Councillor S Carson questioned the accuracy of the list of Members in attendance at the Council Meeting on 22 September 2015, which indicated that neither Member was present at the meeting. Officers having checked records after the meeting, it was confirmed that the attendance list in the minutes was correct.

It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley and agreed that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 22 September 2015 be confirmed and signed.

It was proposed by Alderman A G Ewart, seconded by Alderman J Tinsley, and agreed that the minutes of the Special meeting of Council held on 12 October 2015 be confirmed and signed.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Deputations

There were no deputations.

7. Business Required by Statute

(i) Signing of Legal Documents

On a proposal by Alderman W A Leathem, seconded by Councillor M H Tolerton, it was agreed that the following legal documents be signed at the Meeting.

- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council with Hillsborough Sporting Gun Club registered office at Apartment 6B Cairn Gardens, Crumlin, County Antrim, BT29 4UZ – Lease, Agreement and Deed of Surrender in respect of lands at Old Coach Road, Hillsborough for a term of 10 years

- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council with Mr David Gibson of 56 Drumaknockan Road, Hillsborough, BT26 6UP – Agreement in respect of leasing land adjacent to Drumlough Amenity Site, Dromara Road, Hillsborough for a term of 3 years with the option to extend a further 3 years

- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council with Mr Thomas and Mrs Doreen Elizabeth Harvey of 23 Drumlough Road, Hillsborough – Agreement in respect of leasing land adjacent to Drumlough Amenity Site, Dromara Road, Hillsborough for a term of 3 years with the option to extend a further 3 years

- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council with Mr Samuel Jess of 49a Drumaknockan Road, Hillsborough, BT26 6QP – Agreement in respect of leasing land adjacent to Drumlough Amenity Site, Dromara Road, Hillsborough for a term of 3 years with the option to extend a further 3 years

- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council with Dr Roger Rosborough of 7 Drumlough Road, Hillsborough, BT26 6PY – Agreement in respect of leasing land adjacent to Drumlough Amenity Site, Dromara Road, Hillsborough for a term of 3 years with the option to extend a further 3 years

- Hillsborough and Castlereagh City Council with Mr James Watson of 47 Drumaknockan Road, Hillsborough, BT26 6QP – Agreement in respect of leasing land adjacent to Drumlough Amenity Site, Dromara Road, Hillsborough for a term of 3 years with the option to extend a further 3 years

(i) Signing of Legal Documents (Cont'd)

- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council with Clanmil Housing Association Limited of Northern Whig House, 3 Waring Street, Belfast, BT1 2XD – Licence Agreement for the use of car park at 46c Castle Street, Lisburn for a period of up to 4 weeks

8. Adoption of Minutes of Committees

It was agreed that the minutes and recommendations of the undernoted meetings be adopted, subject to any changes recorded below:

Leisure & Community Development Committee **6 October 2015**
Proposed by Alderman S P Porter
Seconded by Councillor T Morrow

Environmental Services Committee **7 October 2015**
Proposed by Councillor B Hanvey
Seconded by Councillor T Mitchell

Development Committee **7 October 2015**
Proposed by Alderman A G Ewart
Seconded by Alderman W J Dillon

Governance & Audit Committee **13 October 2015**
Proposed by Alderman W A Leathem
Seconded by Councillor V Kamble

Corporate Services Committee **13 October 2015**
Proposed by Alderman J Tinsley
Seconded by Councillor A Grehan

Special Meeting of the Governance & Audit Committee **27 October 2015**

Verbal Update

The Chairman, Alderman W A Leathem, provided a verbal update on the decisions taken at the Governance & Audit Committee at its Special Meeting held earlier that evening, as follows:

Performance Improvement Audit for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Alderman Leathem reported that the Committee had considered a report by the Northern Ireland Audit Office in respect of a performance improvement audit for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

Performance Improvement Audit for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (Cont'd)

Alderman W A Leathem commended Council Officers and staff on the performance improvements during this the Council's introductory year, it being noted that the Council had been required to identify one area of performance improvement objective by 31 May 2015, but in fact had been successful in identifying 16 areas of performance improvement.

Approval of Accounts

Alderman Leathem reported that a substantive part of the Meeting had been considered "in Committee" in the absence of press and members of the public, and reminded the Council that it had granted delegated authority to the Governance & Audit Committee at its Special Meeting on 12 October 2015 to consider these items in order that the accounts could be published on the Council's website by 30 October 2015.

The Council was advised that the Governance & Audit Committee, at its Special Meeting earlier that day, had agreed that in order to facilitate the publishing of the accounts Standing Order 21.1 (2) (c) be applied, which stated that a decision shall not be subject to call in "where an unreasonable delay could be prejudicial to the Council's or the public's interest."

Alderman Leathem reported that the Committee had agreed that the various accounts as presented to the Committee, and which had been certified by the NIAO, be approved, signed and published on the Council's website by 30 October, 2015.

Review of Internal Audit Effectiveness

Alderman Leathem reported that this matter was ongoing and that further reports on this subject would be brought before the Committee, for noting in due course. He encouraged Members to review the action plan on Internal Effectiveness that had been put in place by the Senior Management Team.

Minutes for Noting

Special Planning Committee	1 October 2015
Planning Committee	5 October 2015

The minutes of the above Planning Committee Meetings had been circulated for noting as the Planning Committee had delegated authority on all matters.

Minutes for Noting (Cont'd)

The Chairman of the Planning Committee, Alderman M Henderson, advised that as agreed by the Planning Committee at its Special Meeting held on 1 October 2015 the Minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings would be circulated for approval at the next meeting of the Planning Committee, following which the minutes would be brought before the Council for noting the following month.

Other Matter

Alderman W J Dillon reported that he had received complaints in regard to the length of time some statutory bodies were taking to respond to planning applications, and highlighted one application which had not been sent out for consultation within the timescales laid down. Alderman Dillon requested that these matters be investigated internally.

Alderman M Henderson, Chairman of the Planning Committee, put on record that any problems or complaints in regard to planning matters could be reported to any Member of the Planning Committee, which would be followed up.

9. Report from Chief Executive

It was agreed that the reports and recommendations of the Chief Executive be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below.

Items for Decision

9.1 NILGA Working Groups and Associated Member Networks

Members had been circulated with a copy of correspondence dated 18 September 2015 from NILGA advising of the establishment of a suite of Working Groups to consider key issues for local government at regional level, two of which were to be enhanced through the formation of an associated member network with membership drawn directly from the 11 councils.

The Chief Executive reported that the Council was being asked to consider making an appropriate nomination for:

- Community Planning and Well-Being Network
- Planning and Regeneration Member Network

It was noted that the idea of the networks was to enhance the existing Working Groups through wider elected member participation. The Working Group would perform the substantive policy development work of NILGA on relevant issues and would act as a steering group for the associated network.

9.1 NILGA Working Groups and Associated Member Networks (Cont'd)

The Council had been circulated with a paper outlining the key objectives of the Planning and Regeneration Working Group and Community Planning & Wellbeing Working Group.

The Chief Executive informed the Council that Alderman W J Dillon and Alderman M Henderson currently represented the Council on NILGA's Planning & Regeneration Working Group and the Community Planning & Well-Being Working Group, respectively.

It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Alderman M Henderson, and agreed that:

- Alderman W A Leathem, as the Chairman of the Governance & Audit Committee, be nominated to the Community Planning & Well Being Member Network, and
- Alderman M Henderson, as the Chairman of the Planning Committee, be nominated to the Planning and Regeneration Member Network.

9.2 Guidance on the Effective Complaints Handling and the Principles of Good Administration – Training

The Council had been furnished with a copy of a letter dated 6 October 2015 from the Ombudsman advising of a training package on the principles of good administration assist public bodies in their administrative and decision making process.

It was agreed to approve the appointment of the Performance Development Officer to attend the training on complaints handling being organised by the Office of the Ombudsman.

9.3 Planning Applications – Corporate View

The Transition Manager presented the following two items.

9.3.1 Planning Application S/2011/0659/F

The Council had been furnished with a copy of a letter dated 22 September 2015 from the Department of the Environment, Strategic Planning Division, seeking the Council's views on proposals relating to the above planning application. A copy of a position paper in regard to the preparation of a corporate response on this matter had been circulated to the Council. The Transition Manager responded to questions from Members in relation to the above-mentioned position paper.

9.3.1 Planning Application S/2011/0659/F (Cont'd)

It was agreed that the Strategic Planning Division of the Department of the Environment be advised that the Council's preferred option in response to the above planning application be Option 3, namely; that the Council provides no corporate view on the development but that individual Members or parties may express support for, or object to, the development.

9.3.2 Planning Application I/2014/0332/PREAPP Abstraction of Sand from the bed of Lough Neagh

The Chief Executive reported that the Council had received correspondence dated 28 September 2015 from the Department of the Environment, Strategic Planning Division, seeking the Council's views on proposals relating to the above planning application. A copy of a position paper in regard to the preparation of a corporate response on this matter had been circulated to the Council.

It was proposed by Councillor John Palmer, seconded by Alderman J Tinsley, and agreed that Strategic Planning Division of the Department of the Environment be advised that the Council's preferred option in response to the above planning application be Option 1, namely; that the Council provides a corporate view in support of the development, and that the considerations as outlined in the position paper, as circulated be included in the Council's response.

Councillor S Scott left the Meeting (7.40 pm).

9.4 Lifeline Public Consultation by Public Health Agency (Closing Date 19 November 2015)

The Chief Executive reported that the Public Health Agency was presently consulting on the "Future of the Lifeline Crisis Intervention Service," it being noted that "Lifeline" was the NI regional crisis counselling helpline and 'wraparound' service for people suffering distress or despair. A copy of a briefing paper by Contact NI had been circulated to the Council, it being noted that the briefing paper would be debated at the Contact NI conference on 11 November 2015.

Members noted that they could lend their support on-line to this service at www.protectlifelineNI.org.

It was agreed that any comments that Members may wish to make on Contact NI's briefing paper in relation to the "Future of the Lifeline Crisis Intervention Service" consultation document be submitted to Contact NI before 11 November 2015 in order that such comments might be available for Contact NI's suicide prevention conference on that date.

Councillor N Anderson expressed the view that it was extremely important that a 24-hour, 365-day service continued, which essentially saved many lives.

9.5 Contact NI “Suicide Prevention – What Works?” Conference
Wednesday 11 November 2015 Titanic Conference Centre, Belfast

The Council had been circulated with preliminary details of the above conference.

It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Councillor Jenny Palmer, and agreed that the Council approve the attendance of any Member of Council at the above Conference and that Members confirm their attendance with Members Services as soon as possible, it being noted that the cost of a Member’s attendance would be in connection with travel allowance only.

Councillor S Scott returned to the Meeting (7.43 pm)

9.6 Managing Fraud Risk in a Changing Environment
Tuesday 17 November 2015 - Belfast

The Council had been circulated with details of the above conference which was being organised by the Chief Executive’s Forum.

It was agreed that the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Governance & Audit Committee, or their nominees, be nominated to attend the above Managing Fraud Risk Conference on Tuesday 17 November 2015, it being noted that the cost of a Member’s attendance would be in connection with travel allowance only.

9.7 National Association of Councillors (NAC) AGM
28 November 2015 Harrogate

The Council had been circulated with details of the National Association of Councillors’ AGM which was taking place on 28 November 2015 in Harrogate.

It was agreed that the Council’s representatives on the National Association of Councillors be nominated to attend NAC’s AGM on 28 November 2015 in Harrogate, namely;

Aldermen A G Ewart
Alderman T Jeffers
Alderman M Henderson
Councillor B Bloomfield
Councillor A P Ewing
Councillor V Kamble
Councillor B Mallon
Councillor John Palmer

It was noted that the cost of a Member’s attendance was £604.49.

9.8 46C Castle Street Car Park – Third Party Licence Agreement

The Chief Executive reported that QMAC had approached the Council with regard to gaining access on a short-term basis to the Council's car park at the above address to assist in the development of the adjacent property.

It was noted that the Council's professional advisors had drawn up a Licence Agreement to facilitate this matter and that QMAC had indicated that access arrangements would be needed for approximately two days.

It was agreed to approve the Third Party Licence Agreement to facilitate the access on a short-term basis by QMAC to the Council's car park at 46C Castle Street to assist in the development of the adjacent property.

9.9 Department for Regional Development – Transport NI Eastern Division

9.9.1 Station Road, Lambeg – Proposed Waiting Restrictions

The Council had been furnished with a copy of a letter dated 12 October 2015 from the Traffic Manager of Transport NI Eastern Division, together with a location plan, advising that it was proposed to introduce a working day restriction as follows:

- Station Road (unclassified) – from a point approximately 15 metres north-west of its junction with the B103 Lambeg Road for a distance of 53 metres

It was proposed by Alderman S P Porter, seconded by Alderman M Henderson and agreed that Transport NI Eastern Division be advised that the Council supported the above proposal.

Alderman S P Porter stated that the waiting restrictions would assist the turning of refuse collection vehicles at the location outlined.

Items for Noting

9.10 Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015

The Council had been circulated with, and noted the content of, a copy of the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015 which came into operation on 28 September 2015.

9.11 NI Civil Service Departmental Restructuring Programme

The Council had been furnished with, and noted the content of, a copy of a letter dated 1 October 2015 from the Head of the Civil Service in regard to an update on

9.11 NI Civil Service Departmental Restructuring Programme (Cont'd)

the progress being made to reduce the number of Departments from twelve to nine, following the Assembly election in May 2016.

9.12 Centenary Gallipoli Pilgrimage, 4-10 October 2015

The Council had been furnished with, and noted the content of, a copy of a report on the 2015 Gallipoli Pilgrimage organized by the Somme Association at which the Council was represented by Alderman James Tinsley and Councillor A McIntyre, and attended by the Assistant Director of Leisure Services and Curator, Mr B Mackey.

Alderman J Tinsley expressed thanks to the Assistant Director of Leisure Services/ Curator, Mr B Mackey, and the Research Officer at the Irish Linen Centre and Museum, Dr Ciaran Toal, for having done an excellent job in preparation of the Gallipoli trip, and requested the Chief Executive to convey both his thanks and that of Councillor A McIntyre, to the individuals concerned.

9.13 Date of December Council Meeting

It was noted that following consultation with The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor R T Beckett, the date of the December Council Meeting take place on Tuesday 15 December 2015 at 6.00 pm.

10. Reports from Members on Boards

There were no reports from Members on Boards.

11. Reports on Decisions Subject to the Reconsideration Procedure

There were no reports on decisions subject to the reconsideration procedure.

12. Notice of Motion

There were no Notices of Motion for consideration at the Meeting.

13. Confidential Business

Confidential Report by the Chief Executive

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor R T Beckett, advised that the two items contained in the Chief Executive's Confidential Report required to be considered "In Committee" due to information contained therein relating to individuals concerned.

Confidential Report by the Chief Executive (Cont'd)

The Right Worshipful the Mayor thanked Pastor Ritchie for his address at the commencement of the Meeting following which Pastor Ritchie left the Meeting. (7.50 pm)

Items for Decision

It was agreed that the Chief Executive's Confidential Report be considered "in Committee" in the absence of press and members of the public.

13.1 Amazing the Space – Proposed Peace Building Initiative

The Council had been furnished with a copy of a summary of a proposed Peace-Building initiative entitled "Amazing the Space." The Chief Executive requested the Council to consider if it wished to receive a presentation on this initiative.

13.2 Lord Mayor's Show – London
12-14 November 2015

The Council had been furnished with details of the Lord Mayor's Show in London which was taking place from 12-14 November 2015, together with related documentation, including an official invitation to the Chief Executive to attend this, the 800th anniversary of the Lord Mayor's Show.

It was proposed by Councillor A P Ewing, seconded by Councillor N Anderson, and agreed to come out of committee and normal business was resumed.

Resumption of Normal Business

On the resumption of normal business it was noted that the following decisions had been made:

Item 13.1 Amazing the Space – Peace Initiative

On a proposal by Alderman S P Porter it had been agreed that Officers in the Leisure and Community Services Department discuss this matter in the first instance, with a view to any presentation on this initiative being made to the Leisure and Community Development Committee, it being noted that all Members of Council were entitled to attend any Meeting of a Standing Committee.

Item 13.2 Lord Mayor's Show, London

It had been agreed that the Chief Executive represent the Council at the Lord Mayor's Show in London 14-17 November 2015.

(At this juncture in the Meeting a technical issue arose with the microphones in the Council Chamber. The quality of the audio recording of the proceedings was affected as a result.)

14. Any Other Business

14.1 Bus Route – Old Dundonald Road
Alderman T Jeffers

Alderman T Jeffers updated the Council in relation to a previous decision of the Council to write to the Minister for Regional Development regarding the fact that there had been no public transport facility along the Old Dundonald Road route between Dundonald Ice Bowl and Comber Road. Alderman Jeffers advised that he had attended a meeting with Translink earlier that day and was pleased to report that bus number 19A would be servicing the Old Dundonald Road from 5 April 2016 which would be an hourly service.

Alderman Jeffers, on behalf of the residents in the Dundonald area, expressed thanks to the Council for having corresponded with the Minister for Regional Development on this matter earlier in the year.

14.2 The Late Francis Doone
Councillor O Gawith

The Transition Manager left the Meeting (7.50 pm)

Councillor O Gawith informed the Council of the death last weekend of Mr Francis Doone who had died suddenly whilst taking part in a charity cycle ride for Leukemia Research. Francis had been a former player and the manager of the Seniors at Glenavy GAC, and only a week before he passed away he had led the Club to their first championship victory in 23 years.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor stated that he would be sending a letter of condolence, on behalf of the Council, to Mr Doone's wife and family.

14.3 Moira Junior Park Run
Councillor O Gawith

Councillor O Gawith reported on the success of the Junior Park Run initiative on Sunday mornings in Moira Demesne which had an average of 140 runners each week.

The Transition Manager returned to the Meeting (7.51 pm)

14.4 Low Educational Attainment in Socially Deprived Areas
Councillor N Anderson

Councillor N Anderson outlined the issue of low educational attainment across deprived areas in the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area, Belfast and Northern Ireland in general. Councillor Anderson also highlighted the benefits of education in society which ultimately benefited the local economy and created better citizens & individuals. He stated that education fostered stability in society.

Councillor Anderson elaborated on a number of statistics on the subject of low educational attainment which confirmed that young people from socially deprived areas were eight times less likely to go to university than their counterparts from affluent areas.

Councillor Anderson, having emphasized that a university education for young people should not be determined by post code or parental wage, welcomed the Widening Participation initiatives by both Queens University Belfast and the University of Ulster, the aims of which were to increase the participation of young people in a university education, regardless of their background, abilities or beliefs.

It was agreed on a proposal by Councillor N Anderson that:

(a) the Council writes to the Minister for Employment and Learning, Dr Stephen Farry MLA, to:

- convey the Council's concern in relation to low educational attainment in socially deprived areas across the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area, and in Northern Ireland as a whole,
- convey the Council's support to the work of the Widening Participation initiatives by Queen's University of Belfast and the University of Ulster, and
- asking the Minister to allocate sufficient funding to further and higher educational establishments to ensure that the valuable work of the 'Widening Participation' initiatives can develop and continue

14.4 Low Educational Attainment in Socially Deprived Areas
Councillor N Anderson (Cont'd)

(b) the issue of 'Access to University' be included in the Council's Community Plan and that the Widening Participation Units be included as consultees in the Council's Community Plan.

Alderman S P Porter, having seconded the proposal by Councillor N Anderson, commended Councillor Anderson for having brought this matter before the Council and welcomed the holistic approach that he had outlined.

Alderman S P Porter welcomed the work of the Social Investment Fund's (SIF) South Eastern Steering Group, which had secured significant funding for schools through various projects.

It was agreed on a proposal by Alderman S P Porter that the Council writes to the Chairman of the South Eastern Steering Group, Mr Adrian Bird, (representing the Resurgam Trust) commending the work of the Resurgam Trust and the SIF South Eastern Steering Group which delivered valuable projects throughout the Lisburn area for the benefit of the children and young people.

At the request of Alderman S Martin it was agreed that the letter to the Minister for Employment and Learning on the subject of low educational achievement, as proposed by Councillor N Anderson, be copied to the President and Vice Chancellor of the Queens University of Belfast, Professor P Johnston, and the President and Vice Chancellor of the University of Ulster, Professor P A Nixon.

At the request of Alderman S Martin it was agreed that the Council also puts on record the importance of the issue of 'student retention' as many students require additional support during their first year at university, and that the Council's view on this issue be also conveyed to the Minister for Employment and Learning.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor R T Beckett, reported that £600 had been raised as a result of a collection at the church service on 27 September 2015 to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II being the longest reigning Monarch. The Right Worshipful the Mayor advised that the money raised was being donated to the Dr Barnardos Charity which worked alongside the Resurgam Trust for the interest of local services in the Lisburn & Castlereagh City area.

Councillor Jenny Palmer indicated her support to all of the speakers on the subject of educational attainment and commended Lisnagarvey High School for having surpassed many other schools in the area in regard to GSCS pass rate which she stated was a result of the dedication of the parents of the young people and the teaching staff.

Councillor R Walker left the Meeting (8.06 pm).

14.4 Low Educational Attainment in Socially Deprived Areas
Councillor N Anderson (Cont'd)

Alderman W A Leathem also commended Councillor N Anderson for having brought this matter before the Council and welcomed the fact that all the political parties were in support of the proposals before the Council.

At the request of Alderman W A Leathem it was agreed that the Council's letter to the Minister for Employment and Learning be also copied to the Principal of the South Eastern Regional College, Mr Ken Webb. Alderman Leathem commended the contribution by Mr Ken Webb at the Council's Community Planning Conference on Wednesday 23 September 2015.

14.5 Hillsborough Old Guard Exhibition
Councillor John Palmer

Councillor John Palmer drew Members' attention to the exhibition by Hillsborough Old Guards which was taking place during the weekend of Friday 6 and Saturday 7 November 2015 in Market House, Hillsborough, and which was in addition to the World War One exhibition at that location. Councillor Palmer encouraged Members to visit the Hillsborough Old Guard exhibition.

There being no further business the Meeting terminated at 8.15 pm.

MAYOR