

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of the Shadow Corporate Services Committee held in the Chestnut Room, Lisburn City Council offices, Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn on Tuesday 10th March 2015 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor John Palmer (Chairman)

Councillor J Tinsley (Presiding Member)

Councillor S Martin (Deputy Presiding Member)

Councillors R Butler, S Carson, P Catney, O Gawith, A Grehan, T Jeffers, W Leathem, H Legge, J McCarthy, B Mallon, T Morrow, A Redpath and G Rice

OTHER MEMBERS:

Councillors J Gallen, A McIntyre and U Mackin

IN ATTENDANCE:

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Director of Corporate Services
Director of Finance and Convergence of IT Systems
HR Business Partner

Lisburn City Council

Committee Secretary

1. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of Councillor L Poots and the Chief Executive. An apology for non-attendance was also recorded for Councillor A Ewart – a non-member of the Committee.

Councillor A Redpath entered the meeting. (6.02 pm)

2. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

The Chairman invited Members to declare any Conflicts of Interest 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. No declarations were made nor were any forms submitted.

3. Minutes of Meetings

It was proposed by Councillor J Tinsley, seconded by Councillor O Gawith and agreed that the minutes of the following meetings of the Shadow Corporate Services Committee be confirmed and signed:-

- Special meeting of Committee held on the 28th January 2015 and adopted by the Council at its Special Meeting held on the 12th February 2015;
- Meeting of Committee held on the 10th February 2015 and adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on the 25th February 2015.

4. Confidential Business

It was proposed by Councillor G Rice, seconded by Councillor T Jeffers and agreed that the Confidential Reports of the Director of Corporate Services be discussed "in Committee".

4.1 Confidential Report of
Director of Finance and Convergence of IT Systems

4.1.1 Winding-Up Officer - Duties

The Committee was reminded that the duties of the Winding-Up Officer were contained within those of the Shadow Council's Financial Controller. In addition to the winding-up arrangements, the Shadow Council had directed that the Financial Controller would report back to the Corporate Services Committee on matters pertaining to Castlereagh Borough Council and in particular to the following issues:-

- Single Status Costs and the application of a Capital Direction
- Projected usable reserves as at 31st March 2015
- Loans outstanding in respect of Cregagh Youth Facility, The Robinson Centre, Lock Keeper's Cottage – Industry Barge Project.

4.1.2 Castlereagh Borough Council
Reserves position update & Loan Applications

The Committee noted the content of a report on the above matter which had been prepared by the Acting Director of Finance, Castlereagh Borough Council, and presented to the Committee on the 13th January 2015. The Committee now noted the content of an email dated the 27th February 2015 from Castlereagh Borough Council's Management Accountant providing an update to the report.

4.1.3 Final Accounts for Castlereagh Borough Council
Year ended 31st March 2015

The Committee noted that the above were being prepared for signature in June 2015 by the Chief Financial Officer of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

4.1.4 Final Accounts for Lisburn City Council
Year ended 31st March 2015

The Committee noted that the above were being prepared for signature in June 2015 by the Chief Financial Officer of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

4.1.5 Final Accounts for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council in
Shadow Form) for period ended 31st March 2015

The Committee noted that the above were being prepared for signature in June 2015 by the Chief Financial Officer of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

4.1.6 Transfer Schemes for the
Transfer of Designated Assets and Liabilities

The Committee noted the following transfer schemes for the transfer of Designated Assets and Liabilities:-

- From Lisburn City Council to Belfast Council
- From Castlereagh Borough Council to Belfast Council
- From Lisburn City Council to Lisburn & Castlereagh Council
- From Castlereagh Borough Council to Lisburn & Castlereagh Council

4.1.7 Legal Agreements – NILGOSC Pension Scheme

The Committee noted that work in respect of the above was in progress.

4.1.8 Banking Arrangements

The Committee noted that both predecessor bank accounts would remain open after Vesting Day to facilitate the finalisation of the respective year end accounts. However it was proposed that the financial activities of the new Council would be initially transacted through the Lisburn City Council bankers (Ulster Bank) with a banking tender being processed during the 2015/2016 year with an award date of around September 2015.

4.1.9 VAT Arrangements

The Committee noted that Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council had been VAT registered. However for operational reasons, the extant councils had not as yet been deregistered.

4.1.10 Castlereagh Borough Council
Bank Lodgements 1st April 2015

The Committee noted final lodgement arrangements to Castlereagh Borough Council's bank account on the 1st April 2015.

4.1.11 Danske Bank Chip & Pin Machines

The Committee noted that all Danske Bank "Chip & Pin" machines would be replaced by Ulster Bank equipment prior to Vesting Day, the 1st April 2015.

4.1.12 Year End Stock Take/Inventory

The Committee noted that two teams of supervised staff from the extant councils would be carrying out a detailed stock take/inventory on the 31st March 2015.

4.1.13 Communication with Council Suppliers and Debtors

The Committee noted that - prior to 31st March 2015 – suppliers and debtors of the extant councils would be notified of the new Council's legal entity and interim banking arrangements.

4.1.14 Communication with Grant Paying Bodies

The Committee noted that - prior to 31st March 2015 – all Grant Paying Bodies would be notified of the new Council's legal entity and interim banking arrangements.

4.1.15 Accounting Manual

The Committee noted the content of the draft Accounting Manual for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council. The Director advised that the manual would be subject to ongoing refinement.

4.1.6 New Coding Manual

The Committee noted the content of the new coding structure for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council. The codes - along with the estimates - were being refined by senior management.

4.1.17 IT Issues

The Committee noted that a number of "Winding Up" issues in relation to IT were being addressed, examples of which being:-

- Return of equipment from Members and Officers leaving Council.
- Old email accounts
- Storage and access to old computer files
- Data protection of old computer files

4.1.18 Termination of Payments

The Committee noted that – prior to the 31st March 2015 – an instruction would be issued to Accounts/Payroll in respect of those Members/Officers who were either leaving Local Government or transferring to Belfast.

4.1.19 Termination of Rental/Lease/Licence Agreements

The Committee noted that a schedule of any rentals/leases/licences requiring termination or transfer at the 31st March 2015 would be prepared.

4.1.20 Revision of the VAT Partial Exemption Method/Calculation

The Committee noted that work was in progress to have the Method/Calculation revised before Vesting Day, the 1st April 2015, so as to allow for the Capital Plan to proceed.

4.2 Confidential Report of HR Business Partner

The Director of Finance/Convergence of IT Systems left the meeting for consideration of the report of the HR Business Partner. (6.05 pm)

4.2.1 Workforce Plan

The Committee noted that - under Clause 122(2) of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - the DoE Staff Transfer Scheme which had been developed, negotiated and agreed by the Local Government Reform Joint Forum, was to be utilised for the transfer of local government staff. Under the provisions of the Act, a pro-forma attached to the scheme was required to be returned to the Department by the 13th March 2015 so as to enable the scheme to be made. The pro-forma detailed all members of staff and to where they were transferring. The information would also be provided to the trade unions.

The Committee was provided with an update of the expected workforce who would be employed by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council on Vesting Day, the 1st April 2015.

It was agreed to recommend that:-

- the nature of information to be provided to the DoE be noted;
- the updated information in relation to the workforce to be employed by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council at Vesting Day, the 1st April 2015, be noted.

4.2.2 Transfer of Staff to Belfast City Council

It was agreed to recommend that a progress report in respect of the above be noted.

4.2.3 Environmental Health Group Staff

It was agreed to recommend that a progress report in respect of the dissemination of Eastern Group Environmental Health staff throughout the extant Councils be noted.

4.2.4 Internal One-Step Grievance Procedure

It was proposed by Councillor O Gawith, seconded by Councillor J McCarthy and agreed to recommend that LGRJF Circular LGRJF/10 detailing the Internal One Step Grievance Procedure to link with the RPA Third Party Disputes Resolution be approved and be forwarded to the Trade Unions for consultation prior to its implementation.

Councillor P Catney asked if this was the grievance procedure to be used by staff in relation to the outcome of Single Status. The HR Business Partner confirmed that there was a separate job evaluation appeal procedure in relation to the current Job Evaluation exercise and that staff had 30 days in which to lodge an appeal in respect of the results. This job evaluation appeal procedure would transfer with staff.

4.2.5 Revised RPA Staff Severance Scheme

It was proposed by Councillor O Gawith, seconded by Councillor J McCarthy and agreed to recommend that-

- LGRJF Revised Circular LGRJF/11 entitled "RPA Staff Severance Scheme for Local Government Staff" be noted;
- a draft policy statement for inclusion in the Councils' pensions' policies on discretions for the purposes of implementing Circular LGRJF/11 be approved.

4.2.6 Location, Relocation & Expenses Policy

It was proposed by Councillor O Gawith, seconded by Councillor R Butler and agreed to recommend that LGRJF Circular LGRJF/12 entitled "Location, Relocation and Expenses" be approved and be forwarded to the Trade Unions for consultation prior to its implementation.

4.2.7 Terms & Conditions of Employment

It was proposed by Councillor O Gawith, seconded by Councillor R Butler and agreed that the Terms & Conditions of Employment for employees of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council be approved.

The HR Business Partner confirmed that the terms and conditions of employment of Lisburn City Council staff were protected and would transfer under TUPE.

Councillor S Martin entered the meeting. (6.15 pm)

4.2.8 Measures in Connection with the Transfer

It was agreed to recommend that the proposed measures to be taken in connection with the transfer of staff to the new council be approved and be forwarded to the Trade Unions for consultation and negotiation with Officers.

The Committee noted that a further report for consideration and agreement would be presented to the Shadow Council at its meeting to be held on the 25th March 2015.

The officers present made a verbal report in relation to Single Status, the agreement in relation thereto transferring to the new Council.

It was proposed by Councillor W Leathem and seconded by Councillor P Catney that Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council should keep in line with the present form of Lisburn City Council, ie that no staff would be at a detriment because of Single Status. The officers clarified that all staff would transfer to the new Council on their present terms and conditions which would be protected. The Single Status agreement would transfer also which includes a pay protection for three years. However within those three years, new job descriptions would be agreed and there was no guarantee that the evaluation of the associated job descriptions would result in the same grade as had been previously applied to that post. On the basis of this clarification, Councillor Leathem withdrew his proposal.

The Director advised that it would be necessary to convene a special meeting of Lisburn City Council's Corporate Services Committee to brief Members on the Single Status issue. The Corporate Services Committee of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council would continue to receive updates.

Councillor Catney expressed his thanks to the Officers of the Council who were endeavouring to achieve a positive outcome in terms of negotiations with the trade unions.

4.2.9 Capacity Building Programme

The Committee noted that:-

- a study visit to North Ayrshire Council was proposed for the 18th and 19th March 2015, the focus of which being on planning to incorporate a Planning Committee meeting with the opportunity for follow-up with Members of that committee the following day;
- training for Members on the Management of Meetings had been postponed and would be rearranged in due course.

4.2.10 Appointment of Heads of Service

It was agreed to recommend that the updated plan for the appointment of Heads of Service to the new council be noted. This process would commence in the extant Councils on the 12th and 18th March 2015.

Item reported Verbally

4.2.11 Chief Executive's Appraisal

The HR Business Partner reported that the appraisal of Dr T Donaldson, Chief Executive, had been completed on the 25th February 2015.

4.3 Confidential Report of Director of Corporate Services

4.3.1 Corporate Services Department – Staffing Structure

It was proposed by Councillor J Tinsley, seconded by Councillor S Carson and agreed that the proposed organisational structure for the Corporate Services Department be approved thereby allowing for progress to be made on the filling of Heads of Service posts.

4.4 Additional Confidential Report of Director of Corporate Services

4.4.1 Insurance

It was agreed to recommend that the current position with regard to insurance cover for Elected Members be noted.

It was further agreed to note that the Council was currently out to tender (under the EU Journal) for a review of the insurance policy for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council with effect from the 1st April 2015.

It was proposed by Councillor A Redpath, seconded by Councillor O Gawith and agreed to “come out of Committee” and normal business was resumed.

The HR Business Partner left the meeting and the Director of Finance/ Convergence of IT Systems entered it. (6.31 pm)

5. Reports of Director of Corporate Services

5.1 New Council Flag

It was proposed by Councillor W Leathem, seconded by Councillor A Redpath and agreed that the new flag for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council be blue background with the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council coat of arms, such a flag to be in place by the 1st April 2015.

5.2 Pilgrimage to Gallipoli (4th – 10th October 2015)

It was proposed by Councillor J McCarthy, seconded by Councillor O Gawith and agreed that the above item be discussed “in Committee”.

Members had been provided with a copy of a letter dated the 13th February 2015 from the Somme Association setting out a proposed itinerary for its pilgrimage to Gallipoli from the 4th – 10th October 2015, 2015 being the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli Campaign. The estimated fee for the pilgrimage to include flights and accommodation but not subsistence was £1,350.00 per person.

It was proposed by Councillor W Leathem, seconded by Councillor B Mallon and agreed that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Day of the Corporate Services Committee (or their nominees) be nominated to attend the 2015 Gallipoli Pilgrimage, the Council to be responsible for the payment of approved expenses in this regard.

A similar letter had been received from the Somme Association in respect of its 2015 pilgrimage to the Somme. Members were aware that the Council was organising its own visit to the Somme this year.

5.3 Health & Social Care Board
Consultation – “Future Arrangements for
Access to Blood Cord Bank Services in Northern Ireland”
(Closing Date: 22nd May 2015)

It was agreed to recommend that the above consultation be noted.

5.4 Northern Ireland Assembly Commission
Engagement Strategy 2015-2016
Consultation on Equality Impact Assessment
(Closing Date: 16th March 2015)

It was agreed to recommend that the above consultation be noted.

It was proposed by Councillor J McCarthy, seconded by Councillor G Rice and agreed to come “out of Committee” and normal business was resumed.

5.5 Private Members’ Bill by David McIlveen
Protection of Property
(Closing Date: 27th March 2015)

It was agreed that any comments which Members might wish to make on the above Private Members’ Bill be submitted to Mr McIlveen on an individual or political party basis.

5.6 Donaldson Report Recommendations - Consultation
(Closing Date: 22nd May 2015)

It was proposed by Councillor S Martin, seconded by Councillor R Butler and agreed to recommend that - by way of a response to the above consultation - the Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety be advised that the Council would wish for Lagan Valley Hospital to remain in its current form but with a view to it returning to full operation, in particular the opening hours of the Emergency Department being restored to a 24/7 basis.

5.7 Code of Practice on the Appointment of Independent Members to Policing & Community Safety Partnerships and District Policing & Community Safety Partnerships
(Closing date: 27th February 2015)

It was agreed to recommend that the content of the following items of correspondence be noted:-

- letter dated the 18th February 2015 from the Department of Justice regarding amendments to the above Code;
- proposed amendments to the Code;
- the revised code.

5.8 Libraries NI
Consultation on Review of Opening Hours
(Closing Date: 17th April 2015)

It was agreed to recommend that the content of the above consultation be noted.

5.9 Prudential Indicators 2015/2016 - 2017/2018

Presented by Director of Finance/Convergence of IT Systems

It was proposed by Councillor A Redpath, seconded by Councillor J McCarthy and agreed that the above item be discussed "in Committee".

It was proposed by Councillor G Rice, seconded by Councillor R Butler and agreed that the report on Prudential Indicators for 2015/2016 to 2017/2018 be approved.

It was proposed by Councillor J McCarthy, seconded by Councillor A Redpath and agreed to come "out of Committee" and normal business was resumed.

5.10 Telephony System

It was agreed to recommend that a progress report on the replacement of the telephony system at Lagan Valley Island and at Castlereagh Civic Centre be noted.

5.11 Central Appointments Unit
“All Aboard” News-Sheet – Issue 21

The Committee noted the availability of Issue 21 of the “All Aboard” news-sheet of the Central Appointments Unit at the Office of the First Minister & Deputy First Minister, that issue containing details of public appointment vacancies expected to arise during the second half of 2015.

The Committee noted that further information on public appointments could be accessed at:-

<http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/making-government-work/public-appointments.htm>

<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/government-citizens-and-rights/government-1/public-appointments.htm>

5.12 The Making of Local Government
Bye-Laws for Guidance for Local District Councils

It was agreed to recommend that the finalised Bye-Law Guidance for Local District Councils be noted.

5.13 Northern Ireland Local Government Association
Press Release – “A New Programme for Government:
World Class Councils Sustaining Our Communities”

It was agreed to recommend that the content of the NILGA press release entitled “A New Programme for Government: World Class Councils Sustaining Our Communities” which had been issued on the 2nd March 2015 be noted.

5.14 Budget & Grants to Local Government

It was agreed to recommend that the content of the following items of correspondence in relation to the above matter be noted:-

- letter dated the 16th February 2015 from the Minister of the Environment;
- letter dated the 24th February 2015 from the Minister of Finance & Personnel.

Additional Report

5.15 Reconstitution of the Northern Ireland Policing Board

It was agreed to recommend that the content of a letter dated the 5th March 2015 from the Minister of Justice regarding the reconstitution of the NI Policing Board be noted. The letter dealt with the appointment process and the remuneration of Policing Board members.

5.16 New Lisburn & Castlereagh Policing & Community Safety Partnership Indicative Funding Allocation for 2015/2016

It was agreed to recommend that the Department of Justice/NI Policing Board response of the 9th March 2015 to the Shadow Council's concerns about the indicative funding allocation for 2015/2016 for the Lisburn & Castlereagh Policing & Community Safety Partnership be noted.

5.17 Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament - Report

The Committee noted the receipt of the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament report for 2014 and that it was available for Members' perusal.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Health Working Group
Councillor A Redpath

Councillor A Redpath referred to the Health Working Group which had been in place under Lisburn City Council.

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

- a health working group of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council be established;
- the membership of the above group mirror that of Lisburn City Council in terms of Elected Member representation, ie Chair & Vice-Chair of Corporate Services Committee, Mayor of the Day, representative from each political party represented on the Council;
- the above group determine its terms of reference after the 1st April 2015 with such terms of reference being approved by the Corporate Services Committee.

6.2 IPad Printers – Pilot Scheme

The Director of Finance/Convergence of IT Systems reported that the feedback from the IPad printer pilot had been positive in nature. The Director recommended that IPad printers be provided to all Members of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council at a cost of £3,280.00 for 40 printers.

It was agreed that the recommendation of the Director be accepted.

6.3 Thanks to Members
Councillor John Palmer

Councillor John Palmer, Chairman of the Shadow Corporate Services Committee, thanked Vice-Chairman Owen Gawith, the Members of the Committee and the Officers servicing it for their support and assistance during his term as Chairman. Councillor Palmer wished the new Committee and its Chairman and Vice-Chairman all the best for the future.

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 6.54 pm.

PRESIDING MEMBER/CHAIRMAN