

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council held in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn, on Friday 7 June, 2024 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT:

The Right Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor A Gowan (Outgoing)
Councillor K Dickson (Incoming)

Deputy Mayor
Councillor R Carlin (Incoming)

Aldermen J Baird, A G Ewart MBE, O Gawith, M Gregg,
A Grehan, M Guy, H Legge, S P Porter and J Tinsley

Councillors D Bassett, R T Beckett, P Burke, S Burns,
D J Craig, N Eaton, J Gallen, A Givan, B Higginson, G Hynds,
C Kemp, P Kennedy, J Lavery BEM, U Mackin, A Martin,
T Mitchell, C McCreedy, A McIntyre, M McKeever,
R McLernon, N Parker, G Thompson and N Trimble

IN ATTENDANCE:

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Chief Executive
Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing
Director of Organisation Development and Innovation
Director of Regeneration and Growth
Acting Director of Environmental Services
Acting PSCP/Member Services Manager
Member Services Officers
Technician
IT Officer

Mr D Roberts, Mayor's Chaplain

Commencement of Meeting

At the commencement of the meeting, The Right Worshipful the Mayor (Outgoing), Councillor A Gowan, welcomed those present to the Annual Meeting of Council which was being live-streamed to enable members of the public to both hear and see the proceedings.

The Outgoing Mayor, Councillor A Gowan, requested that all mobile phones be put on silent or switched off for the duration of the meeting and pointed out that, in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, whilst the meeting was being live-streamed, unauthorised recording was not permitted.

The Chief Executive outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. Business of The Right Worshipful The Mayor

The Right Worshipful the Mayor (Outgoing), Councillor A Gowan, welcomed his Mayor's Chaplain, Mr D Roberts to the meeting. Mr Roberts thanked Councillor Gowan for having afforded him the opportunity to be Mayor's Chaplain for the past year, which had been a great privilege. He stated that he had enjoyed attending Council meetings and other events, getting to know and support the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Members and Officers. Councillor Gowan thanked Mr Roberts for the effective, caring and loving way in which he had fulfilled his role.

Councillor A Gowan, highlighted the events associated with the 80th anniversary of D Day the previous day and stated that being part of that had been an amazing way to finish his term in office. He paid tribute to all those staff involved in for their work in ensuring that the commemorations were given the respect and credence they deserved.

2. Apologies

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of the Outgoing Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, and Councillors P Catney, A P Ewing and S Lowry.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

4. Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 8 June, 2023

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held on 8 June, 2023, as adopted and signed at the Meeting of Council held on 27 June, 2023, were noted.

5. Election of Members to Positions of Responsibility 2024/2025

5.1 Election of Mayor 2024/2025

The Right Worshipful the Mayor (Outgoing), Councillor A Gowan, began by thanking the electorate in Downshire East for having voted for him last May. He stated that it was an honour to represent the community in which he lived. He thanked his party colleagues in the DUP for nominating him for the position of Mayor and for the support they had given him over the last year. Councillor Gowan also extended his thanks to his colleagues in other parties in the Council for their support and for the respectful and courteous manner in which they had worked together.

Councillor Gowan paid tribute to a number of Council Officers for their dedication and hard work – the staff in the Mayor's office, the Comms Team, the concierge,

5.1 Election of Mayor 2024/2025 (Contd)

receptionists, porters, the Chief Executive and Directors and the staff in each of their teams. He also thanked the staff in Stepping Stones who had catered for all his events.

Councillor Gowan paid tribute to those who had sat on the Charity Committee. Through their efforts, over £70,000 had been raised for Cancer Fund for Children. He thanked the community for their generosity in having donated to his chosen charity.

Councillor Gowan thanked his wife, Nicola, and family for their support during the past year. He had been extremely busy with Council duties and that had placed a great deal of additional burden and responsibility on Nicola. Now that his Mayoral term had come to an end, Councillor Gowan looked forward to spending more time at home.

Councillor Gowan referred to the sad passing of his father during his Mayoral year and hoped that he had made him proud by fulfilling the pledges he had made when accepting the role of Mayor last year – to promote inclusivity, commitment to hard work, be totally committed to the role, be positive and fair.

Councillor Gowan stated that there had been many highlights during his term of office. He referred to volunteers, without whom the fabric of the community would fall apart. This being Volunteers Week, Councillor Gowan had enjoyed welcoming volunteers at Lagan Valley Island on Monday and hearing of their contribution and commitment to making the community a better place. He also referred to the Mayor's Community Awards having been a special night and to the very successful fund-raising Mayor's Dinner, which had raised £28,000 for Cancer Fund for Children. Councillor Gowan spoke of the Mayor's Parade, Christmas festivities, sports day for local special schools and stated that he had enjoyed his engagement with the deaf community.

Councillor Gowan stated that it had been the privilege of a lifetime to have served as Mayor. Being First Citizen was something that brought not only responsibility, but a huge honour. He finished by thanking everyone for their support during the good times and the bad times throughout the last year.

On behalf of their parties, a number of Members paid tribute to the Outgoing Mayor, namely Alderman J Tinsley, Alderman A Grehan, Councillor J Gallen, Councillor N Trimble, Councillor G Hynds and Councillor R Carlin. Reference was made to the great leadership shown by Councillor Gowan during his term in office, having engaged with all sections of the community, and the fact that he had fulfilled all the promises he had alluded to at last year's Annual Meeting. He had done the Council proud over the last year and was especially admired for how he had carried out his duties following the sad passing of his father. A fantastic amount of money had been raised for Cancer Fund for Children and this too was commended.

Councillor Gowan paid tribute to the Outgoing Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave. He thanked him for having represented him on those occasions he

5.1 Election of Mayor 2024/2025 (Contd)

had been unavailable. Councillor Gowan stated that himself and Councillor McCleave had worked well together and that the Deputy Mayor had fulfilled his role superbly well.

As the Outgoing Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, had been unable to attend the meeting, a video message was played for Members. Councillor McCleave stated that the last year had been his best since joining the Council. Being Deputy Mayor had enabled him to attend so many events and meet fantastic people along the way. Holding this office would not have been possible without the support of this family, for which he thanked them. He paid tribute to the staff in the Mayor's office. Councillor McCleave thanked the Outgoing Mayor, Councillor A Gowan, whose efforts and focus had been remarkable, and who he had worked very well with. Finally, Councillor McCleave extended his best wishes to the Incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

On behalf of their parties, a number of Members paid tribute to the Outgoing Deputy Mayor, namely Alderman J Tinsley, Alderman A Grehan, Councillor J Gallen, Councillor N Trimble and Councillor R Carlin. Members thanked Councillor McCleave for the manner in which he had discharged his duties as Deputy Mayor and for having carried out an outstanding job in assisting the Mayor during the past year.

At this point, The Right Worshipful the Mayor (Outgoing), Councillor A Gowan, declared the offices of Mayor and Deputy Mayor vacant. Councillor Gowan removed his Chain of Office.

The Outgoing Mayor having sought nominations for the position of Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council for 2024/25, Alderman A Grehan (Nominating Officer for APNI) stated that it gave her great pleasure in nominating Councillor K Dickson. This proposal was seconded by Councillor A McIntyre and agreed.

The Outgoing Mayor, having declared Councillor K Dickson elected as Mayor for 2024/25, handed over his Chain of Office and vacated his seat at the top table.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, took his seat at the top table and signed the Declaration of Office.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, began by stating how humbled and honoured he was to have been appointed the next Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council. He was a proud Lisburn man and holding this office would give him the opportunity to give back to and serve the community. He felt a profound sense of gratitude and responsibility and promised to serve with dedication and passion.

Councillor Dickson thanked the electorate of Downshire East, without whom this opportunity would not have been possible. They would be in the forefront of his mind as he sought to represent the Council in the coming year. Councillor Dickson extended his thanks to his APNI colleagues in the Council, as well as the entire Lagan Valley Alliance Association, for their continued support.

5.1 Election of Mayor 2024/2025 (Contd)

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, thanked his family, many of whom were present in the public gallery, for their support. He went on to pay tribute to his predecessor, Councillor A Gowan, who had been a great representative for the Council, as well as the Outgoing Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, who had carried out his role with dedication.

Councillor Dickson stated that the Council was fortunate to have good relationships between each of the political parties and individuals in the Council Chamber, who wanted to do their very best for the communities which they represented. In the last 10 years, since Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council had been established, the Council had grown and changed into the diverse community it was today, with Elected Members from all backgrounds, communities and generations. Councillor Dickson stated that this diversity was a strength for the Council area and hoped that over the course of the coming year he could highlight the many ways the Council area could be a shared space for everyone.

There would be several firsts associated with Councillor Dickson's appointment to the position of Mayor. He hoped his appointment would signify that anyone in the Council area had the potential to become Mayor; it was not limited to one type of person or background. For the first time, there were many in this Council area who would see someone with a potentially similar life experience to them in this role. Councillor Dickson also referred to the fact that he was the youngest person to serve as Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and it would be a clear goal of his to involve young people in much of what he did this year.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, advised that his theme for the coming year was 'Healthy Minds, Healthy Planet', comprising two themes for which he was incredibly passionate. The first of those was mental wellbeing. NI had pretty shocking statistics around mental health, particularly amongst young people. He hoped that over the coming year he could use his role to have some open and frank conversations about what could be done to look after the most important organ in the body – the brain. The second of the themes was environmental activism. It was important to promote biodiversity throughout the Council area. Climate emergency was a challenge and everyone had a role to play in addressing that.

Councillor Dickson advised that his Mayoral Charity for the coming year would be Emerge Counselling Services in Lisburn. This was a community-based charity that focussed on mental health and wellbeing.

On behalf of their parties, a number of Members congratulated the Incoming Mayor, namely Alderman J Tinsley, Councillor J Gallen, Councillor N Trimble, Councillor G Hynds and Councillor R Carlin. Members wished Councillor Dickson well for the year ahead and commended his chosen charity.

5.2 Election of Deputy Mayor 2024/2025

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, sought nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor for the ensuing year 2024/2025.

5.2 Election of Deputy Mayor 2024/2025 (Contd)

Councillor R Carlin (Nominating Officer for SF) nominated himself for the position of Deputy Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council for 2024/25. This proposal was seconded by Councillor D Bassett and agreed.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, handed over the Deputy Mayoral Chain. The Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin, took his seat at the top table and signed the Declaration of Office.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Carlin, who had been an Elected Member of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council for 5 years, stated that he had loved every minute of being a Councillor, engaging with community activists, sports groups, etc. He commended the cross-community and cross-party approach that existed in the Council and thanked his colleagues for that.

Councillor Carlin thanked the electorate of Castlereagh South for voting for him. It was a great honour to serve the people of that area.

Councillor Carlin paid tribute to the Outgoing Mayor, Councillor A Gowan, for the way in which he had fulfilled his role and commended the fantastic amount of money raised for his charity. He went on to pay tribute to the Outgoing Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, who had made history by becoming the first Sinn Féin Deputy Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council. Councillor Carlin referred to Councillor Dickson now being the Council's youngest Mayor, as well as a number of other historic changes in other council areas. He stated that this showed change in society and there was a chance to become a more young, modern and inclusive society. He looked forward to the year ahead, shared in a collaborative way.

Councillor Carlin congratulated Councillor Dickson on his appointment to the position of Mayor and stated that, as Deputy Mayor, he would support and assist him anyway he could. He looked forward to working with the Mayor in the year ahead to deliver for people right across the Council area. He also commended the Mayor's chosen charity.

Councillor Carlin finished by thanking his party colleagues for nominating him for the position of Deputy Mayor and his family for their support.

On behalf of their parties, a number of Members congratulated the Incoming Deputy Mayor, namely Alderman J Tinsley, Alderman A Grehan, Councillor J Gallen and Councillor N Trimble. They wished him well in his new role and looked forward to working with him.

5.3 Election of Chairs and Vice-Chairs for 2024/2025

Arising from the nominations made by the Nominating Officers, the following appointments of Chairs and Vice-Chairs for 2024/2025 were agreed on a proposal made by Alderman J Tinsley and seconded by Alderman A Grehan:

5.3 Election of Chairs and Vice-Chairs for 2024/2025 (Contd)

(i) Planning Committee

Chair Alderman M Gregg
Vice-Chair Councillor S Burns

(ii) Governance & Audit Committee

Chair Alderman S P Porter

(iii) Communities and Wellbeing Committee

Chair Councillor D J Craig
Vice-Chair Alderman H Legge

(iv) Environment and Sustainability Committee

Chair Councillor P Catney
Vice-Chair Councillor G Hynds

(v) Regeneration and Growth Committee

Chair Alderman M Guy
Vice-Chair Alderman A G Ewart

(vi) Corporate Services Committee

Chair Councillor N Trimble
Vice-Chair Councillor N Eaton

6. Election of Members to Committee Positions 2024/2024

Arising from the nominations made by the Nominating Officers, the following nominations for membership of Standing Committees for 2024/2025 were agreed on a proposal made by Alderman J Tinsley and seconded by Alderman A Grehan:

6.1 Planning Committee

Alderman J Tinsley
Councillor D J Craig
Councillor U Mackin
Alderman O Gawith
Councillor G Thompson
Councillor A Martin
Councillor N Trimble
Councillor D Bassett
Councillor P Catney

6. Election of Members to Committee Positions 2024/2024 (Contd)

6.2 Governance & Audit Committee

Councillor S Burns
Councillor D J Craig
Councillor A P Ewing
Councillor A Givan
Alderman O Gawith
Councillor N Eaton
Councillor P Kennedy
Councillor M McKeever
Councillor S Lowry
Councillor A Martin
Councillor R McLernon
Councillor D Bassett
Councillor P Burke
Councillor J Gallen

It was noted that The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin, were ex-officio Members of the above Committee.

6.3 Communities and Wellbeing Committee

Alderman S P Porter
Alderman S Skillen
Councillor R T Beckett
Councillor B Higginson
Alderman A Grehan
Councillor C Kemp
Councillor S Lowry
Councillor A McIntyre
Councillor G Thompson
Councillor T Mitchell
Councillor D Bassett
Councillor G McCleave
Councillor J Gallen

It was noted that The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin, were ex-officio Members of the above Committee.

6.4 Environment and Sustainability Committee

Alderman S Skillen
Alderman J Tinsley
Councillor S Burns
Councillor A Gowan
Councillor C McCready
Alderman O Gawith
Councillor P Kennedy

6.4 Environment and Sustainability Committee (Contd)

Councillor A McIntyre
Councillor M McKeever
Councillor N Parker
Alderman J Baird
Councillor R McLernon
Councillor G McCleave

It was noted that The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin, were ex-officio Members of the above Committee.

6.5 Regeneration and Growth Committee

Councillor A Gowan
Councillor J Lavery
Councillor U Mackin
Councillor C McCready
Alderman M Gregg
Alderman A Grehan
Councillor C Kemp
Councillor N Parker
Alderman J Baird
Councillor A Martin
Councillor T Mitchell
Councillor P Burke
Councillor J Gallen

It was noted that The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin, were ex-officio Members of the above Committee.

6.6 Corporate Services Committee

Alderman A G Ewart
Councillor R T Beckett
Councillor A P Ewing
Councillor A Givan
Councillor B Higginson
Councillor J Lavery
Alderman M Gregg
Alderman A Grehan
Alderman M Guy
Councillor C Kemp
Alderman H Legge
Councillor P Burke
Councillor G McCleave

It was noted that The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin, were ex-officio Members of the above Committee.

7. Lisburn & Castlereagh Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)
Chairman 2024/2025

In accordance with the Justice (NI) Act 2011 under which the position of Chairman of the Policing & Community Safety Partnership was rotated in turn by each of the four largest parties represented on the Council immediately after the last local general election, it was noted that the Chairman of the Lisburn & Castlereagh PCSP for 2024/2025 was an APNI Member.

Alderman A Grehan, Nominating Officer for APNI, advised that Councillor S Lowry would be Chairman of the Lisburn & Castlereagh PCSP for 2024/2025. This information was noted.

At the conclusion of the meeting, The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, thanked those present for their attendance and, there being no further business for consideration, the meeting concluded at 3.11 pm.

Mayor