

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 8th April 2026 at 6.00 pm.

**PRESENT IN
COUNCIL CHAMBER
(COMMITTEE):**

Councillor B Higginson (Chair)

Aldermen A Ewart MBE and P Porter

Councillors T Beckett, K Dickson, A Ewing, J Lavery BEM,
R. McLernon and The Hon N Trimble

**PRESENT IN
REMOTE LOCATION
(COMMITTEE)**

Councillors J Harpur and N Parker

**PRESENT IN
REMOTE LOCATION
(NON-COMMITTEE)**

Councillors G Hynds and J Tinsley

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive
Director of Finance & Corporate Services
Director of Organisation Development & Innovation
Head of Assets
Head of Finance
Head of Governance & Communications
Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development
Head of Innovation
Corporate Communications Manager
Member Services Officers (HB & EW)

Commencement of Meeting

The Chair, Councillor B Higginson, proceeded to welcome everyone to the meeting and advised that it would be audio recorded unless the item on the agenda was to be considered under confidential business.

Unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per 8.6 of the Council's Standing Orders. Mobile phones were to be turned off or on silent mode for the duration of the meeting. Members attending remotely were asked to keep their cameras on. Finally, the Chair 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.

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

The Chair, Councillor B Higginson, welcomed Rachael Davidson to the meeting, the recently appointed Manager of Corporate Communications.

1. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of Councillor J Bamford (Vice-Chair), Alderman M Gregg and Councillor G McCleave.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Report of Chief Executive

3.1 Chief Financial Officer

The Chief Executive had provided a report regarding the role of Chief Financial Officer which had transferred to him in June 2025 when the previous Director of Finance & Corporate Services left the council's employ.

However, a new Director of Finance & Corporate Services, Mr Paul Dane, had since been appointed and had commenced his new role in March. The Chief Executive welcomed Paul to the team.

The role of Chief Financial Officer has now transferred back to the Director of Finance & Corporate Services and the Audit Office has been informed of this change. It was agreed that the Chief Executive's report be noted.

4. Report of Director of Regeneration & Growth

4.1 Prison Officer Memorial, Castle Street, Lisburn

The Chief Executive presented this report on behalf of the Director of Regeneration & Growth.

At the Full Council meeting in November 2025, Alderman J Tinsley had proposed that engagement take place with a view to a memorial to prison officers who had lost their lives be put in place in Lisburn.

Working with colleagues in Planning Service and with the Prison Service, a design for a memorial had been produced, details on which had been appended to the Officer's report, and a location chosen at Castle Street in Lisburn. The aim was to have this memorial completed in advance of Remembrance Sunday 2026.

Councillors agreed to this recommendation as a fitting tribute which was agreed on proposal by Alderman A G Ewart and seconded by Councillor A Ewing.

5 Report of Director of Organisational Development & Innovation

5.1 Vacant Properties Officer (DfC Pilot)

The Director had provided a report and correspondence from DfC and Solace NI regarding a new post, Vacant Properties Officer, a two year fixed term post. The post would be funded by DfC but the council would employ this Officer and be responsible for day to day delivery of the project.

The Director's report highlighted that vacant properties contributed to urban blight, reduced housing supply and raised regeneration concerns. It was noted that this role would focus on data collection and assessment and would support economic development and environmental health.

Councillor N Trimble, in proposing the above recommendation stated that, while not an aspect of this report, he had some hesitation in relation to a future potential of the Council becoming a residential landlord, which he asked to be noted.

It was proposed by Councillor N Trimble, seconded by Alderman P Porter, and agreed to recommend that the Officer's recommendations be agreed; namely that Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council:

- engage with the proposed Vacant Properties project
- recruit a fixed-term Vacant Properties Officer for a two-year period.

6 Report of Head of Innovation

6.1 Digital, I.T. and Innovation Report

Reports on the undernoted topics had been provided and their contents duly noted.

- Digital, IT and Innovation Update
- Current Digital Workstreams

The Head of Innovation also gave a presentation to the Committee entitled 'Update - Digital I.T. & Innovation' in which he outlined some recent improvements, including:

- Microsoft 365 had been rolled out to all Council staff and Members
- Cisco telephony had improved communication reliability
- Improved accessibility on the website and online services
- Early AI integration and Power BI upskilling
- Cyber security training.

7. Report of Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development

7.1 Leave Policy

Reports on the undernoted topics in relation to Council staff across all Departments had been provided and their contents duly noted:

- Leave Policy
- The Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay Regulations (NI) 2026

The Head of Service provided a verbal update in regard to an amendment to the policy on Parental Bereavement Leave which included miscarriage as part of the Leave Policy to comply with recent legislation considered by the Executive on 24 March 2026 and that came into effect from 6 April 2026.

It was proposed by Councillor N Trimble, seconded by Councillor A Ewing, and agreed to recommend that the amended Leave Policy to progress to JCNF for consultation, as outlined, be agreed.

Alderman J Tinsley left the meeting remotely at 6.25 pm.

8. Report of the Head of Finance

8.1 Treasury Outturn 2025/26

In addition to the report, the following had been provided by the Head of Finance:-

- Treasury Management Report (Quarter 3) 2025/26
- Prudential Indicators Report (Quarter 3) 2025/26

The Head of Finance responded to questions and the report was duly noted by Members.

9. Any Other Business (Non-Confidential)

9.1 Working Conditions in the new Lisburn Primary Care Centre
Alderman P Porter

Alderman P Porter raised the issue of the excessive heat in the new Lisburn Primary Care Centre (at LVH) and pointed out that several staff had told him it was uncomfortable to work in. He asked if there was anything the Council could do to have this issue addressed. The Chief Executive undertook to inform the Chief Executive of the Health Trust of the issue raised by Alderman Porter.

9.2 Notice of Motion on Transparency
Councillor G Hynds

Councillor Hynds welcomed Mr Dane, new Director of Finance & Corporate Services, and stated that he was hopeful that the final outstanding element of the Notice of Motion on Transparency, that he had brought forward in January 2025 would be progressed further.

In Committee

It was proposed by Councillor A Ewing, seconded by Councillor K Dickson, and agreed that the Confidential Reports be considered "in Committee". (Recording was paused at this stage in proceedings. There were no members of the press and no public present.)
(6.19 pm)

Each of the confidential reports were confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

10 Confidential Report from the Head of Assets

10.1 Report on Tender Awards

(Redacted report to become available following ratification by full Council and signing of the contracts)

Tender reports and a summary of the tenders awarded had been provided with the narrative report.

It was proposed by Councillor K Dickson, seconded by Councillor N Trimble, and agreed to recommend that the tenders awarded in regard to the following contracts, together with the attendant tender reports, be noted:-

- T25/26-068 - Lisburn Public Realm Interactive Light Floor Project;
- F25/26-030 - Supply and Fit of Tyres and Associated Services;
- T25/26-037 - Future Leaders Youth Project;
- T25/26-040 – Peace Through Faith;
- T25/26-033 – Stewarding and Crowd Control Services

It was further agreed to recommend on the proposal by Councillor K Dickson and seconded by Councillor N Trimble that the signing and sealing of the Tender documents be approved.

11. Confidential Report from the Head of Planning and Capital Development

The Chief Executive presented the undernoted reports which had been provided in advance.

- 11.1 Quarterly Update on the Financial Position on the Capital programme 2025-2030
(Redacted report to become available post financial year with Capital programme released as part of the budget setting process each year)

It was proposed by Councillor R McLernon, seconded by Councillor A Ewing, and agreed to recommend that the updated financial position of the capital programme, the net cost of which remained within the approved budget, be agreed.

- 11.2 Movements and changes in the Capital Programme to February 2026
(Redacted report to become available post financial year with Capital programme released as part of the budget setting process each year)

It was proposed by Councillor J Laverty, seconded by Councillor K Dickson, and agreed to recommend that the movements, changes and revised budgets of the projects, as outlined, be agreed.

12. Confidential Report from Head of Finance

- 12.1 Quarterly Finance Report - Quarter 3, 2025/26
(Redacted report will become available after ratification).

The Quarterly Finance Report for Quarter 3 had been provided, along with associated appendices, to Members and the content was duly noted.

- 12.2 Management Accounts – Period 11
(Redacted report will become available after ratification).

The Management Accounts for the period ending 28th February, together with the narrative report by way of explanation, were provided and duly noted.

The Chief Executive responded to further questions of a financial nature from three councillors.

13. Any Other Business

Dealt with under Item 9.

The Chair, Councillor B Higginson, thanked everyone for their attendance, and there being no further business - the meeting concluded at 6.57 pm.

MAYOR/CHAIR