

**LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL****Minutes of Meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Committee held in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, on Wednesday 3 June 2026 at 6.00 pm****PRESENT IN CHAMBER:**

Alderman O Gawith (Chair)

Councillor S Burns (Vice-Chair)

Alderman J Baird

Councillors J Bamford, G Hynds, B Magee, C McCready, M McKeever and N Parker

**PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:**

Councillors D Bassett and R McLernon

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Director of Environmental Services

Head of Service (Waste Management &amp; Operational Services)

Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk &amp; Emergency Planning)

Head of Service (Building Control &amp; Sustainability)

Member Services Officers (EW and BS)

**Commencement of the Meeting**

The Chair, Alderman O Gawith, welcomed those present to the meeting and advised that it would be audio recorded unless the item on the agenda was to be considered under confidential business. The Chair stated that unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per the Council's Standing Orders. The Chair asked that mobile phones be put on silent or switched off for the duration of the meeting.

In accordance with the Protocol for Remote Meetings, the Chair asked that those attending via zoom to ensure that the meeting could not be seen or heard by any other person at their remote location when confidential business was being considered. The Chair proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. **Apologies**

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of Alderman S Skillen and Councillors P Catney, A Givan and A Gowan.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor M McKeever declared an interest in item 4.2 **End of Year HMO Report**, and advised that he would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

Following the meeting Councillor McKeever submitted a written declaration of interest form stating that his family have an HMO.

### 3. Report by Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services)

#### 3.1 Digital Depot - Update

The Mayor, Alderman A Grehan joined the meeting during this item of business (6.05 pm). She left the meeting at the end of this item of business (6.07 pm).

The Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services) delivered this report, which the Members had already been furnished with.

In response to a question from Councillor M McKeever regarding any potential risk to software failure, the Director of Environmental Services advised that a Project Board was set up specifically for the Digital Depot and a risk register is established.

It was proposed by Councillor M McKeever, seconded by Councillor S Burns, and agreed to note the update.

#### 3.2 NI Reuse and Repair Week – Funding Award

The Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services) delivered this report, which the Members had already been furnished with.

Alderman J Baird asked how the event had been promoted given it was due to take place the following evening. The Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services) advised that engagement had taken place with partner agencies already engaged in this work which included repair networks.

Councillor J Bamford welcomed the report and thanked the team involved for organising the event.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor C McCready, and agreed to note the update.

#### 3.3 From Waste to Worth: Northern Ireland Waste Prevention Programme Consultation

The Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services) delivered this report, which the Members had already been furnished with.

In response to questions from Members regarding the proposed Deposit Return Scheme, Circular Schools, income and credit for tonnage weight, the Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services), advised as follows:

- The Deposit Return Scheme is not operational and all the details are yet to be fully realised. This includes whether the council would be credited for the volume of materials recycled through this facility.
- The council engages with schools under the Eco-Schools NI programme and it would be more prudent to further develop this programme rather than add an additional layer under Circular Schools which may be difficult for schools to accommodate under the current scheduling of the curriculum.

### 3.3 From Waste to Worth: Northern Ireland Waste Prevention Programme Consultation (Cont'd)

It was proposed by Councillor G Hynds, seconded by Councillor J Bamford, and agreed to recommend approval of the proposed consultation response in relation to the From Waste to Worth: Northern Ireland Waste Prevention Programme and that it is submitted by the closing date of 10 July 2026.

### 3.4 Adjustment of Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) Opening Hours

The Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services) delivered this report, which the Members had already been furnished with.

The Director of Environmental Services and the Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services) responded to comments and queries from Members regarding the opening hours of HRCs. Following a lengthy discussion, recorded votes took place.

It was proposed by Councillor G Hynds, seconded by Alderman J Baird, to return to and retain 'winter opening hours' on an annual basis.

There were three votes in favour, eight votes against, the voting being as follows:

In Favour: Alderman J Baird, Councillor G Hynds and Councillor R McLernon.

**TOTAL: 3**

Against: Councillor J Bamford, Councillor D Bassett, Councillor S Burns, Alderman O Gawith, Councillor B Magee, Councillor C McCready, Councillor M McKeever and Councillor N Parker.

**TOTAL: 8**

It was proposed by Councillor N Parker, seconded by Councillor C McCready, to amend the opening hours as follows:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 10.00 am – 5.00 pm, with one late night opening on a Thursday, 10am to 7.00 pm and Saturday 9.00 am – 5.00 pm.

There were eight votes in favour, three votes against, the voting being as follows:

In Favour: Councillor J Bamford, Councillor D Bassett, Councillor S Burns, Alderman O Gawith, Councillor B Magee, Councillor C McCready, Councillor M McKeever and Councillor N Parker.

**TOTAL: 8**

Against: Alderman J Baird, Councillor G Hynds and Councillor R McLernon.

**TOTAL: 3**

The proposal for the amended opening hours was declared 'carried'.

#### 4. Report by Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning)

##### 4.1 Food Control Service Plan 2026/2027

The Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning) delivered this report, which the Members had already been furnished with.

In response to comments from Councillor G Hynds regarding staffing shortfall, reduction in funding and reduction in in-person visits, the Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning), advised that funding depended on how many food businesses were operational in the council area throughout the year. The new structure implemented had seen the introduction of multi-discipline officers who can discharge food, and health and safety functions during a single visit. Group training can be provided to businesses and there are also online protocols which provide support.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor S Burns, and agreed to note the content of the Food Service Plan for 2026/2027.

##### 4.2 End of Year HMO Report

Councillor M McKeever left the meeting during this item of business (6.51 pm).

The Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning) delivered this report, which the Members had already been furnished with.

In response to a question from Councillor G Hynds regarding how the council identifies an unlicensed HMO, the Head of Service advised that the HMO team gathers information from a variety of sources which allows them to cross check the status of a dwelling/property and its category as an HMO .

Councillor N Parker commented that an HMO licence application had been granted by the council's Planning Department in 2025 and asked why this was not recorded in the report. The Head of Service advised that while the HMO had been approved in 2025 it was not valid until the 2026-2027 year.

It was proposed by Councillor S Burns, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to note the content of the HMO year-end report 2025-2026 received from Belfast City Council for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

##### 4.3 Consultation: The Fire Safety of Domestic Upholstered Furniture

##### 4.4 Consultation: Market Surveillance and Enforcement Framework

##### 4.5 Consultation: Market Diversity and Innovation (Liquor Licensing)

##### 4.6 Consultation: The UK's New Product Safety Framework

Councillor M McKeever returned to the meeting at the start of this item of business (6.54 pm).

The Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning) delivered this report, which the Members had already been furnished with.

- 4.3 Consultation: The Fire Safety of Domestic Upholstered Furniture
- 4.4 Consultation: Market Surveillance and Enforcement Framework
- 4.5 Consultation: Market Diversity and Innovation (Liquor Licensing)
- 4.6 Consultation: The UK's New Product Safety Framework (Cont'd)

Councillor G Hynds commented on the difficulties for Northern Ireland businesses having to comply with both the UK and EU systems.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird and seconded by Councillor J Bamford, to recommend approval of all four consultations - 4.3 Consultation: The Fire Safety of Domestic Upholstered Furniture, 4.4 Consultation: Market Surveillance and Enforcement Framework, 4.5 Consultation: Market Diversity and Innovation (Liquor Licensing), and 4.6 Consultation: The UK's New Product Safety Framework to be submitted on behalf of the council prior to the closing date of 23 June 2026.

With regard to item 4.5, Councillor J Bamford asked for clarification on what criteria would be used to define a cultural venue and for examples of when a cultural venue licence could be used. The Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning) commented that this would involve setting up the opportunity to allow a liquor licence to be granted for an event, such as Proms in the Park, a concert or some form of social gathering that would not ordinarily have the opportunity to have a licence transferred to it from an established liquor licence, or by applying for an annual licence through the surrender principal. Councillor J Bamford asked who would have the ultimate responsibility for granting the licences and how would compliance be monitored. The Head of Service replied that the granting of a licence or a renewal licence would go through the court service and the PSNI would be responsible for the enforcement of the liquor legislation.

With reference to the liquor licence, Councillor G Hynds commented that the response could be strengthened regarding barriers to entry, market competition and the reform that is needed.

Discussion ensued, which resulted in additional comments being recommended at Q16 of 4.5 Consultation: Market Diversity and Innovation (Liquor Licensing). The Chair advised that item 4.5 would be revisited later in the meeting and with confirmation of the proposed additional wording in order for the consultation to be submitted before the closing date.

A revised proposal was made by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor J Bamford, and agreed to recommend approval for three of the consultations - 4.3 Consultation: The Fire Safety of Domestic Upholstered Furniture, 4.4 Consultation: Market Surveillance and Enforcement Framework and 4.6 Consultation: The UK's New Product Safety Framework to be submitted on behalf of the council prior to the closing date of 23 June 2026.

#### 4.7 Notice of Motion – Update on Sustainable Burial Options

The Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning) delivered this report, which the Members had already been furnished with.

#### 4.7 Notice of Motion – Update on Sustainable Burial Options (Cont'd)

Councillors B Magee and J Bamford welcomed the report and thanked officers for all the research time and sensitive approach taken to address the notice of motion.

In response to a query from Councillor G Hynds regarding a feasibility study being carried out, the Head of Service advised that the outcome from such a study would be reported to Members.

In response to a query from Councillor C McCready regarding figures on the uptake on sustainable burial options, the Head of Service advised that the council largely provides traditional burials in plots for which there is a high demand and there has been a gradual increase in requests for cremation burials.

It was proposed by Councillor B Magee, seconded by Councillor J Bamford, and agreed to recommend approval:

- to explore the feasibility of providing sustainable burial options within existing and new cemeteries;
- update the Cemetery Rules and Regulations to make it explicit that embalming is not required for interment in council cemeteries;
- to exploring new and alternative ways for people to be buried including the designation of natural burial grounds or woodland areas within the district in the long-term plan for new cemetery provision; and
- the existing engagement by local government through Sustainable NI is used to support the All-Party Group on Climate Action on any identified legislative, planning, infrastructural, or regulatory barriers that may impact the delivery of these sustainable end-of-life options locally.

#### 5. Report by Head of Service (Building Control & Sustainability)

##### 5.1 Consultation Document: Department for the Economy Consultation on Geothermal Licensing

Councillors J Bamford and D Bassett left the meeting during this item of business (7.25 pm and 7.27 pm respectively).

The Head of Service (Building Control & Sustainability) delivered this report, which the Members had already been furnished with.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor S Burns, and agreed to:

- note the report on DfE Consultation on Geothermal Licensing; and
- the proposal for submission and retrospective approval.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Hilden Court Wall  
Councillor G Hynds

Councillor J Bamford returned the meeting during this item of business (7.30 pm).

Councillor G Hynds requested that the council contact Dfl again regarding the wall at Hilden Court as residents had contacted him about the upkeep of the cones and warning tape along its length. The Head of Service (Building Control and Sustainability) advised that Dfl, as the lead agency, had provided confidential feedback, as was their process, and that he would be happy to engage with the DEA Members on this offline.

6.2 Weeding  
Councillor G Hynds

Councillor D Bassett returned to the meeting during this item of business (7.31 pm).

Alderman J Baird left and returned to the meeting during this item of business (7.33 pm and 7.35 pm respectively).

In response to comments from Councillor G Hynds regarding weeding at sites in Lambeg, the Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services), advised that weed management was the responsibility of Dfl. He also advised that the chemicals used to spray and kill weeds required particular training which is not provided to council staff.

6.3 Missed Bin Collections  
Councillor G Hynds

In response to comments from Councillor G Hynds regarding missed bin collections over the last Bank Holiday in May, the Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services), advised that, unfortunately, during holiday periods, there could be a slight disruption to bin collections. He advised that residents should continue to leave their bins out and they would be collected on the next available working day.

6.4 Litter-picking  
Councillor N Parker

Councillor N Parker wished to put on record her thanks for the recent recognition event for community volunteers who litter-pick that the Mayor has hosted and commented that it had been well received and feedback had been phenomenal. She requested that this is something that should be considered annually.

6.5 Update on New Bins System  
Councillor C McCready

In response to questions from Councillor C McCready, regarding the timescale and advertising of the new bins system, the Director of Environmental Services advised that a project board had been established and the timescales at this time remain as agreed by council for implementation in February 2027. Updates will be brought to committee as the project progresses.

6.6 Thanks  
Councillor B Magee

Councillor B Magee wished to thank the officers who had responded swiftly to her recent request for inspections and installation of dog foul signs in Lough Leane in Carryduff. She also commented that she had attended the recent Northern Ireland Environment Forum and encouraged Members to attend if the opportunity arose again and wanted this to be put on record.

6.7 Update on Item 4.5 Consultation: Market Diversity and Innovation (Liquor Licensing)  
Director of Environmental Services

The Director of Environmental Services advised that the proposal for any additional comments at Q16 of the Consultation would read as follows:

“Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council wishes to add an additional comment in respect of the current regime regarding liquor licensing. It is considered that the opportunity for competition can be limited based on the surrender principle and would support greater flexibility to ensure increased opportunity for competition and encourage business start-up.”

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor J Bamford, and agreed, with the additional comments being added to Q16, to recommend approval of 4.5 Consultation: Market Diversity and Innovation (Liquor Licensing) to be submitted on behalf of the council prior to the closing date of 23 June 2026.

7. Confidential Report from the Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services)

The Chair, Alderman O Gawith, advised that the confidential report item would be dealt with “In Committee” due to containing information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

“In Committee”

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor C McCready, and agreed that the following matter be considered “In Committee,” in the absence of members of the press and public being present.

The member of the press seated in the public gallery left the Council Chamber (7.50 pm).

7.1 Redevelopment of Carryduff Household Recycling Centre and Waste Service Depot – Outline Business Case

(Redacted report will be available in June 2026 following ratification at June 2026 council meeting)

Councillor N Parker left and returned to the meeting during this item of business (7.50 pm and 7.53 pm respectively).

Following the presentation of the report, the Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services) and the Director of Environmental Services responded to comments and questions from Members.

It was proposed by Councillor M McKeever, seconded by Councillor D Bassett, and agreed to recommend approval of the Outline Business Case to enable officers to progress the redevelopment in line the programme time scales.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor C McCready, seconded by Councillor S Burns, and agreed to come out of Committee and normal business was resumed.

The Chair, Alderman O Gawith, thanked Members for their attendance. He also commented that he had an enjoyable and interesting year as Chair.

Councillor M McKeever thanked and congratulated Alderman O Gawith for his chairmanship.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.04 pm.

---

Chairperson