

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber Lagan Valley Island and Remote Locations on Tuesday 25 February, 2025 at 7:02 pm

PRESENT

The Right Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor K Dickson

Aldermen J Baird, A G Ewart MBE, M Gregg, A Grehan,
H Legge, A McIntyre and J Tinsley

Councillors R T Beckett, S Burns, P Catney, D J Craig,
N Eaton, A P Ewing, A Givan, A Gowan, J Harpur,
B Higginson, C Kemp, J Lavery BEM, S Lowry, D Lynch,
U Mackin, A Martin, G McCleave, C McCready, M McKeever,
R McLernon, T Mitchell and G Thompson

REMOTE:

Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin
Aldermen O Gawith and S Skillen, and Councillors D Bassett,
J Gallen, G Hynds and Hon N Trimble

IN ATTENDANCE:

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Chief Executive
Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing
Director of Organisation Development and Innovation
Director of Regeneration and Growth
Director of Environmental Services (Acting)
Head of Finance
Corporate Communications Manager
Member Services Officers (BS, EW)
IT Officer
Technician

Commencement of the Meeting

At the commencement of the meeting, the Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, welcomed those present to the February meeting of Council which was being live streamed to enable members of the public to hear and see the proceedings. He pointed out that, should the meeting go into committee to consider confidential business, any members of the press and the public in attendance would be required to leave the Council Chamber for the duration of those matters.

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

The Right Worshipful the Mayor 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.

Commencement of the Meeting (Cont'd)

The Right Worshipful the Mayor remembered Councillor Nicola Parker on the death of her step-father, Mr Robert Beattie, in recent days.

Alderman J Tinsley informed the Council of the passing of a former Member of the Lisburn Borough Council, Rev William Beattie, and asked that the Beattie family be remembered in thoughts and prayers.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor extended a welcome to the newly appointed Corporate Communications Manager, Eoin Jennings, who had commenced employment recently with the Council, and stated that he looked forward to working with Eoin in the near future.

Prayers

The Right Worshipful the Mayor welcomed his Chaplain, Rev Stephen Reain-Adair to the meeting. Rev Reain-Adair gave an address and said a prayer during which he too remembered the bereaved families mentioned by the Mayor, following which Rev Reain-Adair left the meeting.

1. Business of The Right Worshipful the Mayor

1.1 Mayor's Engagements

The Council noted a number of engagements attended by The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, and the Deputy Mayor, since the previous meeting of Council.

At this point, The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson, referred to his ongoing project with local eco-schools. A short video of a recent visit by the Mayor to Carr Primary School in Lisburn was played, which showed some of the pupils from the school's eco-club in discussion with the Mayor about plans to have chickens and/or ducks in their eco garden. The Mayor thanked the staff and pupils of Carr Primary School for facilitating his visit.

2. Apologies

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of Alderman S P Porter, Councillors P Kennedy and N Parker, and the Director of Finance & Corporate Services.

3. Declarations of Interest

At the outset the Right Worshipful the Mayor referred to a recent discussion at a Committee meeting earlier in the month on the protocol for declaration of Members' interests and in order to provide clarity around this protocol made a number of points.

3. Declarations of Interest (Cont'd)

The Mayor reminded Members of the report that had been published last year by the Assistant Commissioner for Standards which had arisen from a previous case of this Council. In that report it had stated clearly that Members should first declare any conflict of interest at the beginning of the meeting or before the item is discussed and that the Member(s) should leave the meeting during the discussion of that item for both pecuniary and significant non-pecuniary interests. The report also stated that there was an onus on other Members of the Committee to voice their concern and to challenge other Members if they deem it necessary if they are aware of a conflict another Member might have and which that Member has not declared.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor emphasised that the onus on maintaining the ethics and standards of this Council falls on all Members of Council.

The following non-pecuniary declarations of interest were declared in respect of item 8.1 Adoption of Communities & Wellbeing Committee Minutes of 4 February 2025

- Alderman S Skillen in respect of membership of: a) Ballybeen Improvement Group, b) Pride of Ballybeen and c) Dundonald Purple Vine which are listed as seeking funding under the Community Festivals Fund (CWC Minute item 4.2 refers), and
- Councillor A Gowan, – in view of family members attending Annahilt Primary School and Friends School Lisburn and having assisted Dromara Connect and Annahilt WI in their applications for funding under the Community Support Grant Fund (CWC Minute item 4.1 refers).

4. Council Minutes

4.1 Meeting of Council – 28 January 2025

It was proposed by Alderman James Tinsley, seconded by Alderman A Grehan, and agreed that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 28 January 2025 be confirmed and signed.

4.2 Special Meeting of Council – 6 February 2025

It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Alderman A Grehan, and agreed that the minutes of the Special meeting of Council held on 6 February 2025 be confirmed and signed.

5. Matters Arising

5.1 Council Meeting held on 28 January 2025

Follow Up on Actions from Special Council Meeting to Receive DfI Roads (Eastern Division) – 18 November, 2024

Further to the issues raised at the previous meeting of Council, Councillor J Lavery expressed dissatisfaction that there still had been no updates on the number of queries that had been raised with DfI Roads at the special meeting of Council on 18 November, 2024, including the issue he, himself, had raised in connection with Brookfield Special School. Councillor Lavery thanked the Director for his recent efforts in following up on any response from DfI Roads.

Councillor C McCready also spoke on this matter and wished to be associated with the sentiments expressed by Councillor J Lavery.

It was agreed on a proposal by Councillor J Lavery, seconded by Councillor C McCready that:

- DfI Roads (Eastern Division) be requested to present themselves to the Council again to explain why there has been no reply to the Council's queries and to give an assurance that this would not happen again, and
- the Council writes to the Minister for Infrastructure conveying the Council's dissatisfaction in this matter and seeking clarity on why this Council had not received any correspondence back on all the issues raised, in particular the issue of the functionality about the online portal which was meant to be working for all Elected Members across Northern Ireland.

6. Deputations

There were no deputations.

7. Business Required by Statute

(i) Signing of Legal Documents

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Alderman M Gregg, and agreed that the following legal document be signed at the meeting:

- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Claraghlea Ltd, 156 St Dymphna's Road, Dromore BT78 3LY – Letter of Appointment for Programme of Minor Works for 10 Vacant Shopfronts in Lisburn City Centre (T24/24-035)
- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Gibson Quarries (Banbridge) Ltd, 1 Kilmacrew Road, Banbridge BT32 4ES – Contract for Annual Tender Schedule – AT3 Supply/Delivery/Laying of Quarry and Bituminous Bound Materials and Associated Items – 1st December – 30th November 2027 (T24/25-019)

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

- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and John McQuillan (Contracts) Ltd, 11 Ballinderry Road, Lisburn BT28 2SA – Contract for Annual Tender Schedule – AT3 Supply/Delivery/Laying of Quarry and Bituminous Bound Materials and Associated Items – 1st December – 30th November 2027 (T24/25-019)
- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Northstone (NI) Limited Materials Division, Croaghan Quarry, Shinny Road, Coleraine BT51 4PS – Contract for Annual Tender Schedule – AT3 Supply/Delivery/Laying of Quarry and Bituminous Bound Materials and Associated Items – 1st December – 30th November 2027 (T24/25-019)
- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Devity Contract Services Ltd, 40 Devesky Road, Carrickmore BT79 9BU – Contract for Hydebank Pavilion Refurbishment and Toilet Provision (T23/24-024)
- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Atkinsrealis, The Vantage, 32-36 Great Victoria Street, Belfast BT2 7BA – Contract for the provision of Professional Services for Hamilton's Shed Staff Accommodation Project
- Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and BHSF, 13th Floor, 54 Hagley Road, Birmingham B16 8PE – Contract for Occupational Health Services 2024 (T24/25-018)

8. Adoption of Minutes of Committees

Communities & Wellbeing Committee

4 February 2025

Proposed by Councillor D J Craig

Seconded by Alderman H Legge

Matters Arising

Local PEACEPLUS Action Plan: Theme 1 Regeneration\Transformation
Match Funded Projects

Chairperson, Councillor D J Craig, advised that as this matter had been raised at a previous meeting under Confidential Business he would wish to seek a further update later in the meeting during Confidential Business.

Environment & Sustainability Committee

5 February 2025

Proposed by Councillor P Catney

Seconded by Alderman Tinsley

In proposing the minutes of the committee Cllr Catney, Chairperson, referred to item 4.6, relating to a proposal to procure an additional four vehicles, and advised that this could not be progressed on the assumption of a previous business case. It was noted that in line with the Council's financial regulations and good governance, officers would present a new business case to the Environment and Sustainability Committee on 5th March 2025.

Matters Arising

Item 4.6 Page 69
Fleet Strategy

At the request of Alderman J Tinsley and following questions and concerns raised by Alderman M Gregg on this matter, the Chief Executive provided an update on the procurement of four new RCVs. He confirmed that the four vehicles had been ordered and that there had been no unnecessary delay during the procurement process.

Remote Attendance by Members

Alderman A Grehan referred to a recent request by a Member that, until the necessary software was in place to allow Members on Zoom to be displayed on a screen in the Council Chamber, the names of those attending remotely would be read out. Alderman Grehan requested that the names be read out at this point in the meeting.

The Chief Executive advised that those Members on Zoom had been displayed on the screens up until the start of the meeting that evening. He also updated Members on the progress to date in relation to the purchase of the above-mentioned software.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor then read out the names of the seven Members who were in attendance remotely.

Alderman A G Ewart proposed that a technician be made available to attend all Committee meetings until the new software was in place in order that the names of those attending remotely could be displayed on screen, similar to the arrangement at Council meetings.

The Chief Executive explained the technical difficulties of Alderman Ewart's proposal, including the lack of budget and staff resources. He also indicated that these issues tied in with the recent Notice of Motion on the subject of Transparency that had been considered and agreed at the Corporate Services Committee this month, and that financial costings were being prepared currently. The Chief Executive advised that a report would come back to Members for consideration in terms of the motion's wider proposal.

The Chief Executive responded to a number of further comments by Alderman Ewart and provided further clarification in relation to Alderman Ewart's proposal. The Chief Executive undertook to discuss the matter further with the Director of Finance & Corporate Services and Alderman Ewart off line.

Alderman Ewart withdrew his proposal.

Corporate Services Committee
Proposed by Councillor N Trimble
Seconded by Councillor N Eaton

12 February 2025

Regeneration & Growth Committee

Proposed by Alderman A Grehan

Seconded by Alderman A G Ewart

13 February 2025

Planning Committee (for Noting)

6 January 2025

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting of 6 January 2025 had been circulated for noting as these minutes had been agreed at the subsequent meeting of the Planning Committee on 3 February 2025. It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Councillor S Burns, and agreed that their contents be noted.

9. Report from Chief Executive

There were no reports from the Chief Executive.

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. Notices of Motion

There were no Notices of Motion for consideration.

13. Confidential Business

There was no confidential business for consideration.

14. Any Other Business

14.1 Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2
Councillor J Harpur

Further to the Minister's announcement earlier that day about the next steps for Phase 2 of the Belfast Rapid Transit project Councillor Harpur expressed disappointment that the plans to extend the new Glider service to Carryduff had been dropped and that once again Carryduff had been left out. Councillor Harpur referred to the increased demand for improved public transport links in Carryduff.

Councillor Harpur stated that despite clear evidence and repeated calls from residents the Glider service was not being extended to one of the fastest growing communities in the region. He emphasised that questions must be asked on what

14.1 Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2 (Cont'd)
Councillor J Harpur

measures DfI would bring forward to address this shortfall. Carryduff need clear commitments on alternative improvements such as enhanced bus services, active travel investment and better connectivity across Castlereagh South. Councillor Harpur stated that this tied directly in with the wider Active Travel plan and if the government are serious about reducing car dependency the infrastructure that makes walking cycling and public transport must be realistic options.

Councillor B Higginson concurred with the sentiments raised by Councillor J Harpur.

It was proposed by Councillor J Harpur, seconded by Councillor B Higginson and agreed that the Council writes to the Minister for Infrastructure to seek clarity on what measures would be introduced to make sure Carryduff gets the transport investment it needs. Councillor Harpur emphasised that the people in Carryduff deserve answers and that the Department must be clear on how they intend to deliver real transport solutions for this area now and in the future.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor R Carlin, and Councillor J Gallen having made specific comments on this matter also spoke in support of Councillor Harpur's proposal.

14.2 Development of Land deemed Protected
Councillor J Lavery

Councillor J Lavery advised that he had been notified earlier that day by a number of residents from the Castlereagh East DEA about work taking place on a portion of land deemed protected between Millmount and Ballyoran House and Old Mill Grove. It was noted that this land had been proposed previously for development but because of its protected status the application had fallen.

Councillor Lavery advised that there had been work on-going to clear hedgerows and trees and enquired as to a) who had authorised this work, b) the reasons for the work being carried out and c) who owns this land. Councillor Lavery requested that the Director of Regeneration & Growth provide this information to the six elected Members representing Castlereagh East, and also to give assurances that an enforcement officer would be sent out to the site to review these works. Councillor Lavery also stated that these works had commenced without any consultation with the residents in the area.

Councillor J Harpur left the meeting at 7.38 pm.

Alderman M Gregg advised that he had emailed enforcement officers already on this matter and put on record his concerns in relation to these works as there are special habitats in that area. He stated that trees were being destroyed and wildlife was being disturbed and that the onus is on the person doing these works to put the land back to the way it was before.

14.2 Development of Land deemed Protected (Cont'd)
Councillor J Laverty

Alderman S Skillen also spoke on this matter having been contacted also by residents. She too had contacted the Planning team.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth confirmed that the Council had received a report the previous evening of the above-mentioned works to the piece of land in question. He advised that he had spoken with Councillor Laverty that afternoon and had assured him that Officers would go out first thing the following morning as a matter of urgency. The Director also advised that the relevant files had been reviewed and Officers were aware of what is permitted and what is not permitted on that site.

14.3 Litter and Dog Fouling
Alderman A G Ewart

Alderman A G Ewart expressed concern in relation to a response to a recent Freedom of Information (FOI) request which had enquired about the number of littering and dog fouling prosecutions by the Council in the past two years. The response had stated that there had been no prosecutions.

Alderman Ewart referred to a proposal he had made three years ago that the Council employ a private company to enforce littering and dog fouling, similar to a service introduced by a neighbouring council, but that as Officers, at that time, had alternative proposals for tackling littering and dog fouling, his proposal in relation to a private company had not been proceeded with.

It was proposed by Alderman A G Ewart, seconded by Councillor U Mackin, and agreed that Officers investigate the option of a private company to tackle littering and dog fouling.

The Chief Executive by way of clarification advised that the response to the FOI request had related the Lisburn City Centre solely in the past four years and that whilst there had been no prosecutions, there had been a number of fixed penalty notices issued. The Chief Executive undertook to send the relevant information on littering and dog fouling to Alderman Ewart.

It was noted that a report on Alderman Ewart's proposal would come to the Environment and Sustainability Committee in due course.

14.4 Street Signage – Update
Councillor C McCready

Councillor C McCready requested an update on street signage in relation to the Council's Tourism Action Plan particularly in relation to signage for toilet provision within Lisburn City Centre and the major tourism spots such as Royal Hillsborough,

The Director of Regeneration & Growth undertook to bring an update report on this matter to a future meeting of the Regeneration & Growth Committee.

14.5 Household Recycling Centre in Dundonald and Relocation of Bring Bank Facility at DIIB
Alderman S Skillen

Alderman S Skillen requested an update on the timescales for the feasibility study for a Household Recycling Centre in Dundonald which, she stated, she had raised with the then Environmental Services Committee in June 2023.

Alderman Skillen also requested an update on the relocation of the Bring Bank facility what was required due to the works at DIIB as she was being contacted often by local residents on this matter.

The Chief Executive and the Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to the issues raised by Alderman Skillen and undertook to come back to the Member, as well as the other Members from the Castlereagh East DEA in due course.

The Director advised that the matter of the relocation of the Bring Bank facility at DIIB had been added to the Construction Services Work Programme and that works were imminent.

14.6 Broadband Infrastructure
Councillor A Gowan

Councillor J Harpur returned to the meeting at 7.47 pm.

Councillor A Gowan advised that following Storm Eowyn almost five weeks ago a number of constituents in Downshire East had only recently been reconnected with their broadband. It was also noted by two other Members that there were still one or two residents in that area still not re-connected.

It was agreed on a proposal by Councillor A Gowan, seconded by Alderman A McIntyre, that representatives from Fibrus and Openreach be invited to attend a meeting of this Council in order that they can engage with the Council to discuss the issues with broadband infrastructure, and to consider what would be done to ensure that such reconnection problems would not happen again.

15. Any Other Confidential Business

“In Committee”

It was proposed by Councillor A P Ewing, seconded by Councillor C McCready, and agreed that the following matter be considered “in Committee”. The livestream was paused at this stage in proceedings, and any members of the press and public left the meeting.

15.1 Local PEACEPLUS Action Plan: Theme 1 Regeneration\Transformation
Match Funded Projects
Councillor D J Craig

At the request of Councillor D J Craig, the Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing provided a comprehensive update on the on-going issue in connection with three projects that were listed in the Council's Local Action Plan. The Director and the Chief Executive responded to a number of questions and comments from Members on this matter.

15.2 Apple Cyber Security Issue
Councillor U Mackin

The Chief Executive responded to a question from Councillor U Mackin in connection with any implications for the Council following the recent media report that Apple had withdrawn its Advanced Data Protection service to UK users.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to come out of Committee and normal business was resumed.

At the conclusion of the meeting The Right Worshipful the Mayor thanked those present for their attendance.

There being no further business for consideration, the meeting was terminated at 8.07 pm.

Mayor