

**LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Special Meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held in the Council Chamber and in remote locations on Thursday, 21 September, 2023 at 6:00 pm**

**PRESENT IN CHAMBER:**

Councillor R McLernon (Chairman)

Alderman O Gawith

Councillors D Bassett, S Burns, A P Ewing, A Givan, C Kemp, P Kennedy and A Martin

**PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:**

Deputy Mayor G McCleave

Mr E Jardine (Independent Member and Vice-Chairman)

Aldermen S P Porter

Councillors P Burke, D J Craig, J Gallen, S Lowry and M McKeever

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION:**

Alderman J Tinsley

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT IN THE CHAMBER:**

Councillor G Hynds

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

In Chamber:

Chief Executive  
Director of Organisation Development and Innovation  
Director of Finance and Corporate Services  
Head of Finance  
IT Officer  
Member Services Officers

Northern Ireland Audit Office

Mr P Barr (present remotely)

**Commencement of the Meeting**

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman, Councillor R McLernon, welcomed those present. He pointed out that, unless the item on the agenda was considered under confidential business, the meeting would be audio recorded.

In accordance with the Protocol for Remote Meetings, the Chairman 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.

At this point, the Member Services Officer read out the names of the Elected Members and Officers in attendance at the meeting.

The Chairman, Councillor R McLernon, asked that mobile phones be put on silent or switched off for the duration of the meeting. The Director of Organisation Development and Innovation outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

Councillor M McKeever joined the meeting remotely at 6.01 pm.

The Chairman, Councillor R McLernon, welcomed Mr P Barr from the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) to the meeting.

1. Apologies (00:02:16)

There were no apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest (00:02:25)

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Confidential Business (00:02:39)

The matters contained in the confidential report 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 Councillor A P Ewing, seconded by Councillor C Kemp, and agreed that the following matters be considered “in Committee” in the absence of members of the press and public being present.

3.1.1 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Approval of Statement of Accounts for Year Ended 31 March, 2023

(Report will not be made available / Final certified accounts will be published)

Alderman J Tinsley joined the meeting remotely at 6.05 pm.

Members had been provided with a copy of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March, 2023. The Head of Finance responded to a number of questions arising from the report. The Committee commended Council Officers for the work involved in the preparation of the Statement of Accounts.

It was proposed by Alderman S P Porter, seconded by Councillor P Kennedy, and agreed to recommend that the Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March, 2023 be accepted and be signed by the Chairman and the Chief Executive.

Adjournment of Meeting

Following discussion, the Chairman, Councillor R McLernon, declared the meeting adjourned to allow Members and Officers additional time to scrutinise the Report to Those Charged with Governance 2022-2023 which had been circulated earlier that day (6.16 pm).

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 6.35 pm.

3.1.2 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Report to Those Charged with Governance 2022-2023

(Report will not be made available / Final certified accounts will be published)

The Chairman, Councillor R McLernon, invited Mr P Barr from the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) to present the above draft report.

The Committee noted Mr Barr's apology in relation to the NIAO's delay in circulating the draft report, due to a number of factors, which was outlined to Members. Mr Barr made a verbal presentation to the Committee, highlighting the key points in the report. Mr Barr and Officers responded to a number of comments and questions raised by Members.

Alderman S P Porter and Councillor S Lowry put on record their concern with the lack of time Members and Officers had to review the draft report, due to the delay in receiving it from NIAO.

During discussion, it was proposed by Councillor J Gallen, that the Committee be provided a list of contractors awarded Single Tender Actions in 2022/2023, to include the value of each award. This proposal was seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave.

The Chairman and Members paid tribute to Council Officers for their efforts in bringing about the successful report and following further discussion, the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Report to Those Charged with Governance, 2022-2023 was noted by the Committee.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor J Gallen, seconded by Councillor D Bassett, and agreed to come "out of Committee" and normal business was resumed.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.05 pm.

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Mayor/Chairman