

**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 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 6.00 pm.**

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

Councillor S Hughes (Chairman)

Councillor U Mackin (Vice-Chairman)

The Right Worshipful The Mayor  
Councillor S Carson

Aldermen A G Ewart MBE, O Gawith, S Martin,  
S P Porter and J Tinsley

Councillors A P Ewing and J Lavery BEM

**PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION (COMMITTEE):**

Deputy Mayor  
Councillor M Guy

Alderman M Henderson MBE

Councillors S Lowry, J McCarthy, T Mitchell and  
The Hon N Trimble

**OTHER MEMBERS OF COUNCIL PRESENT IN COUNCIL CHAMBER**

Alderman A Grehan

**OTHER MEMBERS OF COUNCIL PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION**

Councillor A Givan

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive  
Director of Finance & Corporate Services  
Director of Service Transformation  
Head of Assets  
Head of Communities (Remote)  
Head of Finance  
Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development  
Head of Parks & Amenities (Remote)  
Administration Manager (Remote)  
IT Officer  
Member Services Officers (RN & BS)

### Commencement of Meeting

The Chairman, Councillor S Hughes, extended a welcome to those present and advised that the meeting would be audio recorded unless the item on the agenda was to be considered under confidential business.

The names of those Elected Members who were in attendance at the meeting, both in person and on a remote basis, were read out by the Member Services Officer.

The Chairman stated that unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per 8.5 of the Council's Standing Orders. The Chairman also reminded everyone to ensure that mobile phones were turned off or on silent mode for the duration of the meeting.

The Director of Finance & Corporate Services proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency. Finally the Chairman 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.

1. Apologies (6.03 pm)

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of Councillor R Carlin and the Head of Corporate Communications & Administration.

2. Declarations of Interest (6.04 pm)

The Chairman invited Members to declare any interests they might have in relation to the business of the meeting and reminded them of the requirement that they complete Declaration of Interest forms in this regard which had been provided with the papers for the meeting and which were also available in the Chamber.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Report of Chief Executive

3.1 Efficiency Review Steering Group (6.05 pm)

The Chief Executive reported on the functions of the Efficiency Review Steering Group (ERSG) since its establishment in March 2016.

The Chief Executive outlined a proposal to widen the function of the ERSG so as to identify opportunities for wider efficiency gains, this being particularly relevant in the current challenging financial climate. The ERSG membership would be extended to allow for a larger, more representative group for the consideration of ideas.

3.1 Efficiency Review Steering Group (Continued)

It was proposed by Councillor T Mitchell, seconded by Alderman O Gawith and agreed to recommend that the work of the Efficiency Review Steering Group and its extended membership be approved.

4. Director of Finance & Corporate Services

4.1 Community Investment Fund Update (6.06 pm)

In the absence of the Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing, her report on the Community Investment Fund update was presented by the Head of Communities who also responded to Members' questions in this regard.

It was proposed by Alderman S P Porter, seconded by The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor S Carson, and agreed to recommend that:-

- the imminent issue of a formal letter of offer to Ballymacash Sports Academy for £250,000.00 against a project of circa £800,000.00 be noted;
- subject to the remaining due diligence issues as detailed in the report being progressed, the issue of letters of offer "in principle" to Crewe United Football Club and Lisburn Rugby Football Club be agreed.

The Head of Communities left the meeting on a remote basis. (6.10 pm)

4.2 Changing Places Policy and Guidance (6.10 pm)

The report was presented by the Head of Assets who also responded to Members' questions.

Further to previous discussion, the following items of correspondence were provided:-

- Analysis report of the consultation on the introduction of Provision for Changing Places Toilets with Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) facilities;
- LCCC responses to main comments;
- Changing Places Policy;
- Changing Places Guidance;
- Equality Screening document;
- Rural Needs Impact Assessment Screening.

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor M Guy, seconded by Alderman S P Porter and agreed to recommend that the Changing Places Policy and Guidance be adopted.

4.2 Changing Places Policy and Guidance (Continued)

It was further agreed that the availability of Changing Places facilities be promoted as widely as possible.

The proposer and seconder of the Motion both asked that their appreciation of the work carried out in this regard be recorded.

5. Report of Head of Corporate Communications & Administration

5.1 Building Illumination Requests (6.15 pm)

In the absence of the Head of Corporate Communications & Administration, her report on the following two requests to have the Council offices lit to mark different charities was presented by the Administration Manager.

It was agreed that the Council offices be lit in green on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023 to mark Less Survivable Cancer Awareness Day (request received from OG Cancer NI (Oesophago-Gastric Cancer)).

It was further agreed that the approval under Exceptional Circumstances of a request from Diabetes UK (NI Branch) to have the Council offices lit in blue on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022 to mark World Diabetes Day be noted.

6. Report of Head of Finance

6.1 Car Parking Bad Debt Write-Off (6.17 pm)

The Head of Finance reported on the matter of Bad Debt associated with the car parking function which had transferred to the Council on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.

It was proposed by Alderman S Martin, seconded by Alderman O Gawith and agreed to recommend that the debt recorded in relation to car parking is written off the ledgers of the Department for Infrastructure.

The Head of Finance undertook to inform Alderman J Tinsley if the Council paid for the pursuance of car parking debts.

Councillor J Lavery left the Council Chamber during discussion of this item. (6.18 pm)

7. Report of Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development

7.1 Elected Member Development Steering Group (6.21 pm)

The Committee noted the content of a report and action notes arising from the meeting of the Elected Member Development Steering Group held on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022. The Council was working towards the Charter Plus standard for Elected Member development.

Councillor J McCarthy joined the meeting on a remote basis during presentation of this item. (6.21 pm)

8. Agenda Item Brought Forward  
Any Other Business

As the remainder of the business before the meeting was of a confidential nature, the Chairman sought agreement to bring forward Item 9 of the agenda – Any Other Business – so that items of a non-confidential nature might be raised when proceedings were being recorded. This was agreed.

8.1 Signage for Toilet facilities for the Disabled (6.23 pm)  
Councillor S Lowry

Councillor S Lowry enquired as to the progress of the roll-out of signage for toilets for the disabled (both visible and non-visible disabilities).

The Head of Assets agreed to provide a response to Councillor Lowry.

8.2 Christmas Switch-On (6.24 pm)  
Alderman S P Porter

Alderman S P Porter asked to be provided with the report detailing the format of the Christmas switch-on in Lisburn and in particular the omission of a street parade. This was agreed.

8.3 Christmas at the Castle (6.25 pm)  
Councillor A P Ewing

Councillor A P Ewing congratulated those involved in the organisation of the event and also expressed disappointment at the omission of a street parade in connection with the Christmas switch-on.

9. Confidential Report from Director of Finance & Corporate Services (6.26 pm)

The reasons for confidentiality were as set out in the agenda, ie:-

9.1 Letting of Bradford Court – Interested Tenant

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

Report to be redacted following completion of any future lease agreement.

9.2 Estimates' Process 2023/2024

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

Report to never be redacted. (Final estimates will be released.)

9.3 Estimates' Process – Pricing Points 2023/2024

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

Report to never be redacted. (Final estimates will be released.)

9.4 Reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

(Confidential for reason of information related to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations for negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a Government Department and employees of, or office bearers under, the Council.)

Report to be redacted after full Council meeting. (22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022)

9.5 Management Accounts Period 6

(Confidential for reason of information (i) relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information); or (ii) related to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations for negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a Government Department and employees of, or office bearers under, the Council.

Report to be redacted after full Council meeting. (22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022)

9.6 Tender for the Provision of a Learning & Development (Soft Skills) Courses Framework – Business Case

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

Report to be redacted post award.

9.7 Efficiency Review Steering Group

(Confidential for reason of information related to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations for negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a Government Department and employees of, or office bearers under, the Council.)

Report to never be redacted.

9.8 Hybrid Working Pilot – Interim report

(Confidential for reason of information related to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations for negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a Government Department and employees of, or office bearers under, the Council.)

Report to be redacted after full Council meeting. (22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022)

In Committee

It was proposed by Alderman S P Porter, seconded by Alderman S Martin and agreed that the Confidential Report of the Director be considered “in Committee”. (Recording was paused at this stage in proceedings.)

9.1 Letting of Bradford Court – Interested Tenant (6.27 pm)

A report in relation to an interested tenant for Bradford Court was presented by the Head of Assets who - together with the Director of Service Transformation - responded to Members’ questions.

It was proposed by Councillor S Lowry, seconded by Alderman J Tinsley and agreed to recommend that:-

- an in-principle exploration of change of building use and requisite planning application with suitable building alterations to meet the needs of the prospective tenant, be undertaken;
- the investment be considered as part of the Council’s Capital Programme on an invest-to-save basis.

Alderman M Henderson left and returned to the meeting on a remote basis during discussion of this item. (6.36 pm and 6.38 pm respectively.)

The Director of Service Transformation and the Head of Assets left the Council Chamber. (6.40 pm)

9.2 Estimates' Process 2023/2024 (6.41 pm)

A report in regard to the 2023/2024 estimates process at a corporate level was presented by the Director of Finance & Corporate Services who – together with the Chief Executive and other officers - responded to Members' questions.

The officers agreed to provide an update as to the number and nature of vacant posts.

It was agreed that the progress report in regard to the 2023/2024 estimates at a corporate level be noted.

The Chairman, Councillor S Hughes, asked to have placed on record that the Committee was aware of the challenging situation which the Council was in relevant to striking the Rates; that the situation should be addressed in a mature, considered manner; and that he was open to discussion with all Members.

Councillor J Lavery returned to the Council Chamber during discussion of this item. (6.42 pm)

Alderman J Tinsley left the Council Chamber during discussion of this item. (6.51 pm)

9.3 Estimates' Process – Pricing Points 2023/2024 within Finance & Corporate Services Directorate (7.03 pm)

A report in regard to the 2023/2024 estimates' process within the Finance & Corporate Services Directorate was presented by the Director of Finance & Corporate Services who – together with the Chief Executive and other officers, responded to Members' comments.

9.3.1 Pricing Point Increments – Identified Services

It was proposed by Alderman O Gawith, seconded by Alderman S Martin and agreed to recommend that:-

- the progress on the 2023/2024 estimates for the Finance & Corporate Services Directorate be noted;
- the Price Point increments for 2023/2024 for a number of identified services as set out in the report be approved.



9.3 Estimates' Process – Pricing Points 2023/2024 within Finance & Corporate Services Directorate (Continued)

9.3.2 Potential savings and reductions

The Officers noted Members' comments as to services where potential savings or otherwise may exist. Such comments would be borne in mind during further consideration of the Estimates by both Officers and the Efficiency Review Steering Group.

Councillors T Mitchell and N Trimble left the meeting on a remote basis during discussion of this item. (7.40 pm and 7.43 pm respectively.)

Alderman A Grehan left the Council Chamber during discussion of this item. (7.44 pm)

9.4 Reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 (7.49 pm)

Presented by Head of Finance who also responded to Members' questions.

In addition to the narrative report, tabular information of the Reserves Summary at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 was also provided.

It was proposed by Alderman O Gawith, seconded by Alderman A G Ewart and agreed to recommend that the report on Reserves be noted and that approval be granted for the earmarking/transfer of the various Reserves as detailed in the Head of Finance's report.

Alderman M Henderson left the meeting on a remote basis during discussion of this item. (7.58 pm)

9.5 Management Accounts Period 6 (7.59 pm)

Presented by Head of Finance.

It was agreed that the Management Accounts for the period ending the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022, together with an extensive narrative report by way of explanation, be noted.

Alderman A G Ewart left the Council Chamber at the conclusion of this item. (8.00 pm)

9.6 Tender for the Provision of a Learning & Development (Soft Skills) Courses Framework – Business Case (8.01 pm)

Presented by Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development.

The following documents had been provided:-

- Business Case for procurement of a new Soft Skills courses framework for Local Government and on behalf of the Local Government Training Group;
- Equality Screening document.

It was proposed by Alderman S Martin, seconded by Councillor U Mackin and agreed to recommend that the tender process for the procurement of a Learning & Development (Soft Skills) Courses Framework be commenced and be progressed by means of Open Tender.

Alderman A G Ewart returned to the Council Chamber at the conclusion of this item. (8.02 pm)

9.7 Efficiency Review Steering Group (8.03 pm)

Presented by Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development who also responded to Members' questions. The Head of Parks & Amenities was also available remotely.

It was proposed by Councillor A P Ewing, seconded by Councillor J Lavery and agreed to recommend that:

- the minutes and action notes of the meeting of the Efficiency Review Steering Group held on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022 be noted;
- the recommendations of the ERSG in respect of amendments to the staffing structure as detailed in the report be approved.

9.8 Hybrid Working Pilot – Interim Report (8.05 pm)

Presented by the Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development who also responded to Members' questions.

It was proposed by Alderman S P Porter, seconded by Councillor A P Ewing and agreed to recommend that:-

- the interim report on the Hybrid Working Pilot be noted;
- the hybrid working arrangements continue until such times as a formal decision is reached in relation to this way of working.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor M Guy, left the meeting on a remote basis.  
(8.17 pm)

10. Any Other Business – Confidential (8.24 pm)

There was no other confidential business raised.

Resumption of Normal Business (8.25 pm)

It was proposed by Councillor A P Ewing, seconded by Councillor U Mackin and agreed to come “out of Committee”. Normal business and audio recording were resumed.

11. Any Other Business (8.25 pm)

Dealt with at Item 8.

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 8.26 pm.

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MAYOR/CHAIRMAN