

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Environment and Sustainability Committee held in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, and remotely, on Wednesday 14th June 2023 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT IN CHAMBER:

Councillor C McCready (Chairman)
Councillor R Carlin (Vice-Chairman)
Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave
Aldermen J Baird, M Gregg, S Skillen, J Tinsley
Councillors S Burns, G Hynds, J Lavery BEM, A McIntyre, M McKeever and R McLernon

PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Gowan

OTHER MEMBERS:

Councillor U Mackin

IN ATTENDANCE:

In Chamber:

Acting Director of Environmental Services (RH)
Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) (WM)
Head of Service (Building Control and Sustainability) (CD)
Acting Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning) (SC)
Member Services Officers (CH, CR)

Commencement of the Meeting

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman, Councillor C McCready, welcomed those present to the meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Committee. The Chairman advised that the meeting would be audio recorded unless the item on the agenda was to be considered under confidential business. 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 C McCready, stated that, whilst the meeting was being recorded, unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per the Council's Standing Orders.

He asked that mobile phones be put on silent or switched off for the duration of the meeting. The Acting Director of Environmental Services, Mr Richard Harvey proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. Apologies (00:02:52)

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of Councillors P Catney, P Kennedy and N Parker.

2. Declarations of Interest (00:03:15)

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Report by the Acting Director of Environmental Services (00:03:27)

3.1 Notice of Motion in the name of former Councillor Nathan Anderson -Support NI Farmers and Lower Food Prices (00:03:33)

Members were provided with a copy of the following Notice of Motion in the name of former Councillor N Anderson, which had been referred to the Committee by Council on 25 April 2023 for consideration:

“This Council recognises the invaluable contribution of the thousands of farmers and other workers within the Agri-foods sector to Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council’s local economy, vibrant community and natural Environment.

This Council notes the late stage in which amendments to the targets within the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 were introduced. This provided insufficient time to assess evidence or satisfactorily consult the Agri-food sector. The targets have potential consequences on food security and food prices particularly in the context of a cost of living crisis. The impact of such targets will be keenly felt by NI’s Agri-food industry, the local economy and Lisburn & Castlereagh residents.

The Council further notes NI farmers are part of the solution. Farmers in NI have signed up to tackling emissions with the GHGIP. Milk production in NI has achieved 68% reduction in fuel and electric emissions between 1990 and 2017. Targets are therefore best considered and achieved in conjunction with this sector.

This Council agrees to write to the Secretary of State to request that HM Government presents a Bill to Parliament to strike down the agricultural targets within the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022.”

Alderman J Baird spoke in support of the Notice of Motion, requesting that the last paragraph of the Notice of motion be amended as follows:

‘This Council agrees to write to the Secretary of State to request that HM Government presents a Bill to Parliament to review the agricultural targets within the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022’.

3.1 Notice of Motion in the name of former Councillor Nathan Anderson
-Support NI Farmers and Lower Food Prices Cont'd

Alderman M Gregg also requested that an amendment to the last paragraph of the Notice of Motion be made as follows:

‘This Council agrees to write to the Secretary of State to request that HM Government reviews, in line with the current Climate Change Emergency Bill, the agricultural targets within the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022.’

Alderman J Baird indicated his agreement to the amendment as requested by Alderman M Gregg.

Councillor R Carlin requested the removal of the second sentence of the second paragraph of the Notice of Motion as follows:

‘This provided insufficient time to assess evidence or satisfactorily consult the Agrifood sector’.

Alderman J Baird indicated his agreement to the amendment as requested by Councillor R Carlin.

In summing up the Acting Director of Environmental Services read out the amended Notice of Motion as follows:

“This Council recognises the invaluable contribution of the thousands of farmers and other workers within the Agri-foods sector to Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council’s local economy, vibrant community and natural Environment.

This Council notes the late stage in which amendments to the targets within the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 were introduced. The targets have potential consequences on food security and food prices particularly in the context of a cost of living crisis. The impact of such targets will be keenly felt by NI’s Agri-food industry, the local economy and Lisburn & Castlereagh residents.

The Council further notes NI farmers are part of the solution. Farmers in NI have signed up to tackling emissions with the GHGIP. Milk production in NI has achieved 68% reduction in fuel and electric emissions between 1990 and 2017. Targets are therefore best considered and achieved in conjunction with this sector.

‘This Council agrees to write to the Secretary of State to request that HM Government reviews, in line with the current Climate Change Emergency Bill, the agricultural targets within the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022.’

Further to members indicating their agreement for the amended Notice of Motion, it was proposed by Alderman J Baird and seconded by Councillor R McLernon.

4. Report by the Head of Service (Building Control and Sustainability) (00:17:10)

4.1 DAERA Consultation on 'Climate Change Reporting by Specified Public Bodies – Developing New Regulations' (00:17:20)

The Committee considered a report which provided information in connection with a consultation launched by DAERA in relation to Climate Change Reporting by Specified Public Bodies.

It was reported that the closing date for the consultation was 9th June 2023, however the Department had agreed to extend the closing date until 30th June 2023, due to the Local Government Elections.

Members were provided with a copy of the draft response to be submitted on behalf of the Council which included responses and views that had been received from Members.

It was proposed by Councillor A McIntyre, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that the Council's response in relation to the DAERA Consultation on 'Climate Change Reporting by Specified Public Bodies – Developing New Regulations' be approved.

5. Report by the Acting Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning) (00:19:27)

5.1 Department of Justice Service Level Agreement (00:19:35)

The Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Sustainability) set out in her report the key information in relation to an updated Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Department of Justice and District Councils in respect of Council Warranted Officers enforcing:

- a) The Manufacture and Storage of Explosives Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 on behalf of the Department in respect of the items listed in Service Schedule 1; and
- b) The Explosives (Fireworks) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2002 in relation to the licensing of fireworks displays.

It was further reported that the SLA was approved by Environmental Health Northern Ireland (EHNI) on 15 March 2023. A copy of the updated SLA had been circulated to Members for their consideration.

It was proposed by Councillor A McIntyre, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that the Acting Director of Environmental Services to sign the Service Level Agreement between Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and the Department of Justice on behalf of the Council be approved.

5.2 Regulated Stand at Down Royal Racecourse (00:22:34)

The Committee considered a report in relation to an application by Down Royal Racecourse for a Regulated Stand Certificate. It was reported that under the provisions of the Safety of Sports Grounds (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, the Council was required to issue Regulated Stand Certificates to stands that:

- a) provided covered accommodation for 500 or more spectators, and
- b) were not located in a designated sports ground.

It was further explained that the Regulated Stand General Safety Certificate, including its terms and conditions if properly applied, should ensure the reasonable safety of spectators attending specified activities at the Regulated Stand at the venue.

Members were provided with a copy of the Regulated Stand Certificate for Down Royal Racecourse for consideration, which included maximum number of spectators, the entry and exiting arrangements, safety management arrangements and contingency plans in the event of an incident.

It was proposed by Councillor R McLernon, seconded by Alderman M Gregg and agreed to recommend that the Regulated Stand Certificate for Down Royal Racecourse in accordance with Safety of Sports Grounds (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 be approved.

The Chairman, Councillor C McCreedy, advised that Any Other Business would be considered at this point in the meeting.

6. Any Other Business (Agenda item 7.0 refers) (00:24:08)

6.1 Provision of Household Recycling Centre (HRC)
Alderman S Skillen (00:24:18)

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Gowan left the meeting remotely at 6.26 pm.

Alderman S Skillen raised concern on the inadequate provision of HRCs in the Dundonald area. Councillor S Skillen's comments in relation to the HRC provision were endorsed by Alderman M Gregg.

Members highlighted that similar issues existed with the Cutts HRC as it sat on the boundary of Belfast City Council and Crumlin HRC which was much closer for Glenavy residents to access than the Cutts HRC where they currently have to travel.

6.1 Provision of Household Recycling Centre (HRC) Cont'd

Further to discussion, it was proposed by Alderman S Skillen seconded by Alderman Martin Gregg and agreed to recommend that a report to be tabled to a future Environment & Sustainability Committee be approved, to include;

- consideration given to a stand-alone Household Recycling Facility in Dundonald, including associated costs and possible location,
- details on the possibility of more centrally located HRCs within the Council area; and
- outcomes of Officers re-engagement with neighbouring Councils to ascertain the feasibility of entering into a service level agreement whereby, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council rate payers could utilise other Council HRC sites.

7. Confidential Report from the Acting Director of Environmental Services
(Agenda item 6.0 refers)

The Chairman, Councillor C McCready, advised that the confidential report items would be dealt with "In Committee" due to (1) containing information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information), and (2) due to information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual and (3) information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

"In Committee"

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor R McLernon, and agreed that the following matters 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 meeting (6.34 pm).

7.1 Provision of a kerbside sort service for the collection and recycling of dry recyclables and food waste from households within the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area (Agenda item 6.1 refers)
(Report will not be made available)

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Gowan re-joined the meeting at 6.39 pm.

The Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) presented this item of business. Officers responded to a number of questions from the Committee arising from the report. It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Alderman M Gregg, and agreed to recommend that:

- the Preliminary Expenditure Form and Financial Appraisal be approved; and
- the procurement exercise for the provision of a kerbside sort service for the collection and recycling of dry recyclables and food waste from households within the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area as outlined in the report be approved.

7.2 Software Licensing, Support & Maintenance for Building Control and Environmental Health Information Management Systems (Agenda item 6.2 refers) (Redacted report to be published on award of contract)

The Head of Service (Building Control and Sustainability) presented this item of business.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Alderman M Gregg, and agreed to recommend that the award of the Single Tender Action for the Licensing Agreement for Building Control and Environmental Health software, including Support and Maintenance for the existing IT software provider, IDOX Software Ltd, for a period up to 31st March 2026, be approved.

7.3 Department for Communities: Period of notice given to terminate the Affordable Warmth Scheme partnership agreement with Councils (Agenda item 6.3 refers) (Report will not be made available)

The Head of Service (Building Control and Sustainability) presented this item of business and responded to a number of questions and comments from the Committee arising from the report.

The Chairman, Councillor C McCready extended his thanks to Officers, and requested that the Committees appreciation be passed to the team for all their work in relation to the Affordable Warmth Scheme. This sentiment was endorsed by Alderman J Tinsley, who paid tribute to Mrs Brenda Harbinson as she had carried out fantastic work to the benefit of many people in the area.

Further to the Committee having noted the report on and the discontinuation of the Councils role in the Affordable Warmth Scheme from 31st August 2023, it was proposed by Vice-Chairman, Councillor R Carlin, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, and agreed to recommend that:

- a letter of correspondence be written to the Department for Communities (DfC) to express the Councils disappointment that the partnership agreement with Councils was being terminated; and
- the letter would include the concerns raised by Members as outlined during the Environment and Sustainability Committee meeting.

7.4 Potential Land Acquisition for Cemetery Use (Agenda item 6.4 refers) (Redacted report to be published December 2023)

Councillor U Mackin left the meeting at 7.23 pm.

The Acting Head of Service for Environmental, Risk and Emergency Planning presented this item of business and provided an update in relation to the above matter. Officers responded to a number of questions and comments from the Committee arising from the report.

7.4 Potential Land Acquisition for Cemetery Use (Agenda item 6.4 refers)
Cont'd

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that:

- the update report on the possible acquisition of land to enable the extension of the existing cemetery, Lisburn New Cemetery Extension, for provision of burial space be noted; and
- a report on the potential acquisition of land adjoining the Cemetery to be tabled to a future meeting for Members consideration be approved.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Alderman S Skillen, and agreed to come out of committee and normal business was resumed.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.30 pm.

Mayor/Chairman