

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of the Regeneration and Growth Committee held remotely and in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn on Thursday 5th October, 2023 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT IN THE CHAMBER:

Councillor J Laverty BEM (Chairperson)
Aldermen A G Ewart MBE, M Gregg, A Grehan and M Guy
Councillors P Burke, K Dickson, U Mackin, A Martin, C McCready and N Parker

PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION:

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Gowan
Councillor T Mitchell (Vice Chairperson)
Alderman S P Porter and Councillor J Gallen

OTHER MEMBER:

Councillor G Hynds

IN ATTENDANCE

Director of Regeneration & Growth
Head of Economic Development
Member Services Officers (BS and CR)
IT Officer

Commencement of Meeting

The Chairperson, Councillor J Laverty, extended a welcome to all present to the October meeting of Regeneration & Growth Committee.

The Chairperson advised that the meeting was being audio recorded unless the item was being considered under confidential business.

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

The Chairperson asked that any Member entering or leaving the meeting advise the Member Services Officer accordingly so that this might be accurately reflected in the minutes.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

Alderman S P Porter joined the meeting remotely at 6.04 pm.

1. Apologies (00:02:55)

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of the Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave.

2. Declarations of Interest (00:03:09)

Councillor U Mackin declared an interest in item 3.2 Bradford Court – Lease Extension due to his membership of the NILGA Executive.

Alderman M Guy declared an interest in item 3.2 Bradford Court – Lease Extension due to her membership of the NILGA Executive.

During the course of the meeting the Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery, declared an interest in item 3.4 New NI Enterprise Services and Closure of NI Business Start Up Programme (Go For It) in view of his role as a director of Inspire Business Centre which has an association with Enterprise NI, which in turn is connected with this new support service.

3. Any Other Business (00:04:07)

As all the items for consideration that evening were of a confidential nature the Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery, wished to bring forward agenda item 4. Any Other Business at this point in the meeting.

3.1 Hillsborough Forest Digital Trail Stakeholder Launch 11 October 2023 (00:04:31)

The Chairperson drew Members' attention to the launch of the Hillsborough Forest Digital Trail for a number of stakeholders on Wednesday, 11 October by way of a thank you for their support during the development of this project. The launch would include a tour of the facilities and an exhibition and demonstration of the new digital trail app. Also, a follow-up event on International Artists Day, would take place on 25 October which would include local schools and celebrity guests, and would hopefully attract some media interest.

3.2 Correction re Date of Adoption of the Local Development Plan 2032 – Plan Strategy (00:05:06)

The Chairperson put on record that in relation to the Adoption of the Local Development Plan - Plan Strategy at the meeting of Council held on 26 September 2023, the date on the Adoption Statement (Appendix no. 4) included a date of 2 October 2023. This date was in error and the actual date of adoption on the published document is 26 September 2023.

3.3 New Businesses in Lisburn City Centre (00:05:50)

Councillor U Mackin having welcomed the three new businesses that had recently opened in Lisburn City Centre asked for an update in relation to the nature of each of these new businesses. Councillor Mackin also stated that it was important that the Council gives any support necessary to these new businesses.

The Head of Economic Development advised that one of the new businesses was Huxo Italian Diner which was located in Bow Street Mall. The other two new businesses were Garretta Hub, a clothing retailer and Blackpoint Perfumes both of which had opened in Bridge Street.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth having acknowledged the importance of supporting the high street businesses undertook to bring a report to Committee by way of an update on those seeking expressions of interest for grant funding in view of there being some monies left in year.

4. Confidential Report from Director of Regeneration and Growth (00:07:50)

For the purpose of the audio recording the Chairperson advised of the reasons for confidentiality for the confidential business on the agenda.

“In Committee”

It was proposed by Councillor C McCready, seconded by Alderman M Guy, and agreed that the Confidential Reports of the Director of Regeneration & Growth be considered “in Committee” in the absence of press or members of the public. The audio recording was paused at this stage in proceedings (6.13 pm).

At the Outset the Director of Regeneration & Growth addressed the Committee in regard to the lateness of the report at agenda item 3.4.

4.1 Appointment of Specialist Services for Evaluation Services
(Redacted Report to be published October 2026 when the contract is complete)

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

The Head of Economic Development presented this item of business.

Further to the decision of the Committee at its meeting in June 2023 to appoint a specialist third party on a 3 year contract to deliver evaluation services for Economic Development as well as other services of the Council, the Committee had been furnished with a copy of a revised financial appraisal which had been agreed by the Council’s Financial Services team.

4.1 Appointment of Specialist Services for Evaluation Services (Cont'd)

The Head of Economic Development and the Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to questions from two Members in connection with the above procurement process.

It was proposed by Councillor N Parker, seconded by Alderman A G Ewart, and agreed to recommend that:

- the appointment of specialist services to deliver evaluation services for a 3 year period (1+1+1), with an initial contract for the first year only based on the revised financial appraisal, as circulated, be approved, in order that the contract be awarded, and
- years two and three in regard to the delivery of evaluation services be proceeded with subject to the achievement of agreed targets on an annual basis to the Council's satisfaction.

4.2 Bradford Court – Lease Extension

(Redacted Report to be published after the presentation of the lease, under seal of Council)

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

In response to questions from two Members the Director of Regeneration & Growth elaborated on the issues raised.

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Councillor N Parker, and agreed to recommend that the new three year lease for one of the sitting tenants in Bradford Court, as detailed in the Director's report, under the terms as outlined, be agreed.

4.3 Manor Park Electricity Sub-Station

(Redacted Report to be published after the presentation of the lease, under seal of Council)

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

The Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to a number of questions and comments and provided clarification thereon from the Committee in connection with issues outlined in the report.

It was proposed by Alderman S P Porter, seconded by Alderman A G Ewart, and agreed to recommend that:

- in principle, the relocation of the Manor Park Electricity Sub-Station on to Council land be approved and that the Council enters into a lease agreement with NIE, and

4.3 Manor Park Electricity Sub-Station (Cont'd)

- delegated authority to be granted to the Director of Regeneration & Growth to negotiate the best terms of lease between NIE and the Council which would be subject to Full Council approval under seal.

4.4 New NI Enterprise Support Service (NIESS) and Closure of NI Business Start Up Programme (Go for It)

(Redacted Report to be published following outcome of negotiations or legal proceedings)

Confidential due to containing the following information:

- information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information),
- information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual, and
- information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the council or a government department and employees of, or office holders under, the council

The Head of Economic Development presented this item of business.

It was proposed by Councillor C McCready, seconded by Alderman M Guy, and agreed to recommend that the Committee:

- a) notes the positive evaluation that the NIBSUP/Go for It programme has achieved across each of its key aims from April 2021 to June 2023, including having significantly outperformed the statutory jobs targets for Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council,
- b) notes the update on the roll-out of the new Enterprise Support Service,
- c) provides the match funding, as outlined in the report, to draw down the maximum available UKSPF support for Lisburn and Castlereagh businesses, subject to the estimates process or alternative reallocations within the Economic Development budgets, and
- d) further update reports on the roll-out of the NIESS be received by the Committee in due course.

It was noted that in view of the importance of getting this message out to the Lisburn & Castlereagh businesses as quickly as possible, the Head of Economic Development, would convene briefing sessions for Members either individually or in party groups, if required, to provide further detail on the NIESS and to address any further questions that Members may have on this programme of activity.

5. Any Other Business of a Confidential Nature

5.1 Kirkwood Road Playing Fields
The Chairperson, Councillor J Laverty

The Chairperson drew the Committee's attention to the above item which had been circulated to Members via this month's Information & Correspondence (I&C) Schedule and indicated to the Committee that if they had any questions on this matter or the other item of business that had been circulated on this month's I&C schedule, (namely Integrated Marketing Campaign – Recent Member's Workshop), to direct their questions to the Director directly.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth in response to questions and comments from two Members in regard to Kirkwood Road Playing Fields clarified a number of key issues thereon.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Alderman A G Ewart, seconded by Councillor C McCready, and agreed to come out of Committee and normal business was resumed.

Conclusion of Meeting

The Chairperson, Councillor J Laverty, thanked everyone for their attendance and there being no further business for consideration the meeting was concluded at 6.57 pm.

Chairperson