

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 7th September, 2023 at 6.00 pm

**PRESENT IN
THE CHAMBER:**

Councillor J Laverty BEM (Chairman)

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Gowan

Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave

Aldermen J Baird, A G Ewart MBE, M Gregg, A Grehan, M Guy
and S P Porter

Councillors P Burke, K Dickson, J Gallen, U Mackin, A Martin,
C McCready and N Parker

IN ATTENDANCE

Director of Regeneration & Growth
Head of Economic Development
Head of Planning & Capital Development
Head of Assets
Programmes Manager
Member Services Officers (BS and EW)
IT Officer

Commencement of Meeting

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

The Chairman 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 Chairman 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 Chairman outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. Apologies (00:02:38)

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of the Vice Chairman, Councillor T Mitchell.

2. Declarations of Interest (00:02:56)

There were no Declarations of Interest declared at the meeting.

3. Report by Head of Economic Development (00:03:25)

3.1 Labour Market Partnership Funding Contract 2023/2024 (00:03:31)

The Head of Economic Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with the Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Funding Contract for 2023/2024.

The Committee had been furnished with a summary of the LMP strategic programmes approved by the Department for Communities (DfC) as part of the funding offer.

It was noted that the LMP offer from DfC represented a shortfall when compared with the total projected programme costs as listed in the 2023/24 Action Plan. It was also noted that the Council had a funding allocation in the sum of £100,000, which had been coded for employability and skills initiatives and which had been maintained in the budget estimates as potential match funding for City Deal and 3rd party UK Shared Prosperity Funded projects.

In this regard the Head of Economic Development reported that as it had been confirmed there was no match-funding requirement in the current financial year, it was proposed to re-allocate the Council's allocated match-funding to cover the Labour Market Partnership Action Plan shortfall.

The Chairman, Councillor J Laverty, put on record his thanks and appreciation to the Officers concerned in progressing the LMP Funding Contract within a short timeframe. Other Members welcomed this programme and also expressed their thanks to the Officers in this regard.

It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Councillor U Mackin, and agreed that, in line with delegated authority granted to the Committee by the Council at its meeting on 22 August 2023, the Letter of Offer in relation to Labour Market Partnership from DfC be agreed.

3.1 Labour Market Partnership Funding Contract 2023/2024 (Cont'd)

It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Councillor U Mackin, and agreed to recommend that:

- a) the Council commits to the allocation of £100,000 of existing employability and skills resource, as part of a match funding, towards the appended action plan, as outlined in the report circulated,
- b) the Council initiates delivery of the summarised action plan as set out in the appended document, which would involve the procurement of appropriate third parties, and
- c) approves the progression of an interim contract to replace the Go For It programme, and bridge the period leading up to the UK Shared Prosperity Funded contracts if required.

The Programmes Manager left the meeting at 6.10 pm.

3.2 International Events – Request for Support (00:09:20)

The Head of Economic Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with funding for third party events in terms of tourism major events and tourism small grant support.

It was noted that the Council had been approached by two different event organisers seeking Council assistance towards staging the undernoted events:

- 2024 World Daffodil Convention April 2024
- 2024 European Hockey Federation Trophy Competition March/April 2024

Details in respect of both these events were outlined in the report circulated, including the amount of funding requested.

The Head of Economic Development drew the Committee's attention to a further event by Lets Go Hydro in 2024 that the Council also may be able to support. Whilst all information about his event was not yet available, the Council was in discussion with the event promoters in relation to Council funding towards this event. The Head of Economic Development undertook to update the Committee on this matter in due course.

The Head of Economic Development and the Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to questions from Members in connection with governance issues around the Council's policy on support to third party events, including the Small Grant support (up to £1,000) for smaller localised events. In response to further comments raised, the Head of Economic Development provided assurance to Members that the policy on Council support to International events could be brought back to Committee for review, if necessary, at any time.

3.2 International Events – Request for Support (Cont'd)

It was proposed by Alderman S P Porter, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that in line with the assessment by Officers against the Council's 2023/24 predetermined criteria:

- a) the Council supports the two international events outside of the normal Tourism Major Events policy as outlined in the Head of Economic Development's report, to be funded through earmarked reserves within the General Fund, and
- b) both the events receive the reduced allocations, as outlined in the report, namely;
 - a maximum of £7,750 towards the World Daffodil Convention, and
 - a maximum of £6,250 towards the European Hockey Trophy Competition),

3.3 Balmoral Show – Council Representation (00:28:33)

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Economic Development which outlined the background and key issues in regard to the Council's representation at the Balmoral Show.

The Head of Economic Development reminded Members that at the meeting of the Development Committee in January 2023 the Council had agreed that it would not have a marquee presence at the Balmoral Show as in previous years but would proceed with a smaller presence in an alternative location within the grounds on a reduced budget. The report circulated also set out a number of decisions of the Council in April 2023 as recommended by the Committee at that time.

In this regard the Committee had been furnished with a copy of an evaluation of the Royal Hillsborough Historic Moira (RHHM) campaign and also the Lisburn and Castlereagh Food and Drink Campaign in relation to this year's Show.

The Head of Economic Development also elaborated on a number of issues contained in the evaluation reports.

The Head of Economic Development and the Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to concerns and questions raised by some Members in connection with the proposals for the Council's representation at the Balmoral Show in 2024

It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that:

- a) the analysis provided on each of the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council elements of 2023 Balmoral Show be noted, and
- b) the Council proceeds with an enhanced Food and Drink promotional stand only within the Food and Drink Pavilion at 2024 Balmoral Show, as outlined in the report circulated, at a maximum cost of £20,000.

3.3 Balmoral Show – Council Representation (Cont'd)

The Director assured the Committee that the matter of the Council's representation at Balmoral Show would be kept under review.

4.0 Report of the Head of Planning & Capital Development (00:46:40)

4.1 All Island Strategic Rail Review – Public Consultation of SEA including Publication of Final Draft Report (00:46:46)

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Planning & Capital Development outlining the background and key issues in connection with the All Island Strategic Rail Review (AISRR) the aim of which was to consider how the Island's railways are currently used, what role rail could play in the future, and how the Island's railway could better serve the people of both jurisdictions.

The Committee noted from the report circulated a number of direct recommendations and proposals from the AISRR's draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) which affect the Council area directly, as well as a number of relevant issues in connection with the Council's Local Development Plan, Plan Strategy 2032.

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of a draft response to the AISRR which had been prepared by Council Officers.

A number of Members welcomed the proposals contained in the AISRR that affected the Lisburn and Castlereagh council area.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development responded to questions and comments from the Committee in connection with references in the above consultation to: a) West Lisburn/Knockmore Rail Halt and b) the West of Lisburn inner city link. At the request of a Member the Head of Planning & Capital Development also provided an update on the proposals for a Park and Ride facility at the Knockmore Rail Halt and also the car park at Moira train station.

It was proposed by Councillor J Gallen, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, and agreed to recommend that the LCCC response to DfI outlining the Council's support of the recommendations and proposals identified in the draft SEA Consultation document, in so far as it impacts Lisburn and Castlereagh Council area, be agreed and submitted to the relevant Department by the stipulated closing date of 29 September 2023.

5. Any Other Business (00:55:56)

5.1 Retirement of Head of Assets, Mr Albert Reynolds - Best Wishes from the Committee Alderman A G Ewart (00:56:15)

Alderman A G Ewart, on behalf of the DUP, put on record his best wishes to the Head of Assets, Mr Albert Reynolds, on his forthcoming retirement from the Council's employ, Albert having been employed by the then Lisburn Borough Council some 45 years ago. Alderman Ewart thanked Albert for his dedication and hard work over the past 45 years.

Councillor J Gallen, Alderman A Grehan, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, and Alderman J Baird, on behalf of their respective parties, thanked Albert for his valuable efforts over the years and wished him and his family well for the future.

The Director of Regeneration and Growth also paid tribute to Albert's commitment and dedication to the Council and stated that it had been a pleasure to work with Albert over many years.

Albert having thanked Members and the Director for their kind words, stated that he had enjoyed his employment with the Council and expressed sincere thanks and appreciation to the Director, the Head of Economic Development and the Head of Planning & Capital Development for their friendship and support. He also paid tribute to his team who had worked with him, behind the scenes, over many years.

5.2 Special Meeting of the Regeneration & Growth Committee – 18th September at 6 pm Chairman, Councillor J Lavery (01:04:31)

The Chairman reminded the Committee of the Special Meeting that had been convened on Monday, 18th September at 6.00 pm in order to consider two items of business relating to emerging planning policy to which all Members of Council had been invited to attend.

5.3 Westminster Investment Event, London 5th & 6th September 2023 Chairman, Councillor J Lavery (01:04:56)

The Chairman highlighted the success of the two-day Westminster Investment event that had taken place in London earlier in the week which had been attended by a cross-party delegation from the Council along with The Right Worshipful the Mayor and Council Officers as well as other business and tourism stakeholders. The Chairman expressed thanks and appreciation to the Director, the Head of Economic Development and his team of Officers for their efforts in ensuring a very successful event.

5.3 Westminster Investment Event, London 5th & 6th September 2023 (Cont'd)
Chairman, Councillor J Laverty

The Chairman commended the Council's Tourism Manager on his presentation on the Council's five-year tourism strategy that he had delivered at the Palace of Westminster on the second day.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Gowan, also commended the Director and his team for their efforts in ensuring a very successful event and stated that he looked forward to the positive outcomes in terms of investment into the Council area.

Councillor J Gallen and Alderman A Grehan, having attended this event, paid tribute to the efforts of the Council Officers and Full Circle Management for having delivered a worthwhile event.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth also addressed the Committee and undertook to bring forward a full evaluation of the event in due course. He too commended the Tourism Manager on his presentation.

6. Confidential Report from Director of Regeneration and Growth (00:01:00)

The Chairman advised that the confidential report items were confidential 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 Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor C McCready, 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 (7.12 pm).

6.1 Financial Appraisal for Welding & Fabrication Services Contract (Annually Renewable)
(Redacted Report to be published following Ratification by Council)

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of the Financial Appraisal in connection with the Welding and Fabrication Services Contract (Annually Renewable).

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor K Dickson, and agreed to recommend that the financial appraisal for the provision of Welding and Fabrication Services be approved and that invitations be requested from suitable contractors to tender.

6.2 Draft Heads of Terms relating to Lease for Laurehill Community College, 4G Pitch Development
(Redacted Report to be published following Ratification by Council)

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of the draft Heads of Terms relating to the lease for Laurehill Community College, 4G Pitch Development.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Alderman A Grehan, and agreed to recommend that:

- a) the draft Heads of Terms to lease the area of land adjacent to the Laurehill Community College, hockey pitch and changing pavilion be agreed, and the Council reviews and renews the previous licence for the continued use of the shared assets.
- b) delegated authority be granted to the Chairman of the Regeneration and Growth Committee, together with the Director of Regeneration and Growth, to approve and enter into the final lease and license arrangements, and
- c) the final lease being signed by the Mayor and Chief Executive and sealed at the next subsequent meeting of the Full Council.

6.3 Hillsborough Fort Guards - Uniform
(Redacted Report to be published 31 March 2024)

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of Financial Appraisal for the purchase of Hillsborough Fort Guard uniforms.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth and the Head of Economic Development responded to comments raised in connection with an issue arising from the report circulated.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, put on record his opposition to the Committee's recommendation.

It was proposed by Councillor K Dickson, seconded by Councillor C McCready, and agreed that the recommendations, as outlined in the report circulated, be agreed.

Comments were noted in relation to the benefit of a presentation being delivered to Members on the history and the work of the Hillsborough Fort Guards and the Director undertook to pass these comments to the Tourism Manager.

Resumption of Normal Business

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

Conclusion of Meeting

The Chairman, Councillor J Lavery, thanked everyone for their attendance and there being no further business for consideration the meeting was concluded at 7.40 pm.

Chairman