

**LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL****Minutes of Meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Committee held in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, on Wednesday 4 June 2025 at 6.02 pm****PRESENT IN CHAMBER:**

Councillor P Catney (Chair)

Councillor G Hynds (Vice-Chair)

Aldermen J Baird, O Gawith, A McIntyre, S Skillen and J Tinsley

Councillors J Bamford, S Burns, A Gowan, B Magee, G McCleave, C McCready, M McKeever, R McLernon and N Parker

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Director of Environmental Services

Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk &amp; Emergency Planning)

Head of Service (Waste Management &amp; Operational Services)

Head of Service (Building Control &amp; Sustainability)

Acting Head of Service (Portfolio, IT &amp; Commercialisation)

Member Services Officers (CH, EW)

**Commencement of the Meeting**

The Chair, Councillor P Catney, welcomed those present to the meeting and advised that it would be audio recorded unless the item on the agenda was to be considered under confidential business. The Chair stated that unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per the Council's Standing Orders. The Chair asked that mobile phones be put on silent or switched off for the duration of the meeting.

In accordance with the Protocol for Remote Meetings, the Chair 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. The Chair proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

The Chair expressed sincere thanks to Mr R Harvey for his dedicated service as Acting Director of Environmental Services over the past two years, and to Mrs S Courtney for her valued support during this time. He welcomed Councillors J Bamford and B Magee to the meeting, offering congratulations on their appointments. Congratulations were also extended to Mrs A McCann on her appointment as Director of Environmental Services, with best wishes for her success. The Chair acknowledged the support of Vice-Chair, Councillor G Hynds over the past year and concluded by thanking the Committee for their support during his term as Chair.

Councillor N Parker, on behalf of the Alliance group, thanked the Chair for his work during a challenging year, acknowledged Mrs S Courtney's dedication in covering Mr Harvey's role, welcomed Mr Harvey back as Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency

Planning Head of Service and extended a warm welcome to Mrs McCann in her new role as Director of Environmental Services.

The Vice-Chair, Councillor G Hynds expressed his appreciation to the Chair, commending his dignified handling of challenging situations, his integrity, and his commitment to honesty, which he deeply respected.

1. Apologies

An apology was received on behalf of The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Report by Head of Service (Building Control and Sustainability)

3.1 LCCC Sustainability Strategy & Climate Action Plan including Consultation Outcomes and Summary

Councillor A Gowan briefly left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (6.07 pm) returning (6.09 pm).

The Head of Building Control and Sustainability's report provided a review of the LCCC Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan 2025-2029, developed following a public consultation. It was noted that the Strategy aimed to guide the Council's climate ambitions, aligning with broader Net Zero goals by 2050. Key actions included promoting sustainability, reducing emissions, and integrating with other Council strategies.

The Committee had been provided with links in respect of the following:

- report on the development of a draft LCCC Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan presented at the Environment & Sustainability Committee, 9 January 2025;
- the 'walkthrough' digital presentation of the draft LCCC Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan; and
- project initiation request for works at Altona Deport presented at the Environment and Sustainability Committee, 5 March 2025.

Copies of the final LCCC Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan, along with the Strategy's Public Consultation Report, Equality Screening, and Rural Needs Impact Assessment, were circulated for Members' consideration. The Head of Service addressed a number of questions raised by the Committee in relation to the report.

In response to a request from several Members regarding the inclusion of dog waste bags at all parks/villages (Dog Waste Stations)—an idea suggested during the public consultation—the Head of Service confirmed that all consultation

### 3.1 LCCC Sustainability Strategy & Climate Action Plan including Consultation Outcomes and Summary (Cont'd)

suggestions had been captured and would be forwarded to the relevant teams for consideration.

Following lengthy discussion, it was proposed by Councillor M McKeever, seconded by Vice-Chair Councillor G Hynds, and agreed to recommend that the LCCC Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan 2025-2029 be approved for public launch.

The Chair, Councillor P Catney, advised that Any Other Business would be considered at this point in the meeting.

## 4. Any Other Business (Agenda Item 5.0 refers)

### 4.1 Abandoned Dog Alderman S Skillen

In response to questions from Alderman S Skillen regarding the welfare of the abandoned dog, the Chair advised that he and the Vice-Chair, Councillor G Hynds, had visited the kennels that afternoon. Although they did not see the dog, they were informed that he receives weekly social training, is walked regularly, well-fed, and cared for.

The Director of Environmental Services supported the Chair's comments regarding the care of the dog at the kennels. Members noted that further comment could not be made on this matter as legal proceedings are ongoing. The court sitting on Friday, 30 May 2025, had been held to determine the applicant's standing in the case, with outcomes expected on Friday, 13 June 2025.

Alderman S Skillen thanked the Chair for his efforts on this issue over the past several months, and the Chair, in turn, expressed his appreciation for Alderman Skillen's work on the matter.

The Vice-Chair, Councillor G Hynds concurred with the comments made by the Chair and expressed regret that they were unable to see the dog on their visit to the kennels.

Councillor G Hynds stated that he was dismayed by the entire situation including receipt of the legal advice and issues with transparency and the operation of the council.

Referring to Part 8, Section 48 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, Councillor G Hynds highlighted that councillors had the power to request documentation relating to the activities or decisions of Council officers. He noted that his request was rejected. If that position was to remain, he formally requested that the rejection be provided in writing, along with the reasons for doing so and the legal advice previously cited as the basis for blocking his original proposal.

#### 4.1 Abandoned Dog (Cont'd)

In response to Councillor G Hynds' comments regarding transparency and Council operations, the Director of Environmental Services stated that the Council operated on the principles of openness and transparency at all stages of its work, including through Council and Committee meetings. Information that could be shared publicly was made available, and in this specific case, Members had been kept informed through briefings, emails, and direct engagement with officers.

The Director noted that Frequently Asked Questions were available on the Council's website which had been regularly updated and included the most recent developments following the court hearing on Friday.

Regarding access to legal advice, the Director clarified that it was her understanding that Members had been offered the opportunity to view the advice in person. As the information was legally privileged, it could not be shared publicly. However, Members were welcome to re-engage with officers should they wish to pursue this offer.

In response to the Director's comments, Councillor G Hynds, reiterated that he had verbally requested sight of the legal advice used to block his original proposal.

The Head of Service for Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning reminded Councillor G Hynds that Members had previously been invited to speak with him directly should they wish to view the legal advice which led to the proposal in question not being heard at Committee. He noted that, to date, Councillor Hynds had not availed of this opportunity.

#### 4.2 Bin Strategy Councillor C McCready

In response to several questions raised by Members regarding the outcome of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Waste Strategy Consultation, the Head of Service for Waste Management and Operational Services confirmed that DAERA had not yet published the consultation results, and no publication date had been advised.

#### 4.3 Roadside Verge Grass Cutting - Mr R Bradley Chair, Councillor P Catney

The Chair, Councillor P Catney, requested that officers consider how best to progress a request made by Mr R Bradley regarding the cutting of a roadside verge on the Saintfield Road. Councillor P Catney noted that while the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) cited road safety and sight lines as the reason for the cut, his own observations aligned with Mr. Bradley's view that sight lines were not an issue. He also questioned the timing of the cut in May, given DfI's stated aim to support biodiversity through reduced cutting. Councillor P Catney highlighted Mr Bradley's expertise and passion for biodiversity, noting his professional background in managing nature reserves and urged DfI to follow best practice to maximise biodiversity and community benefit.

5. Confidential Report by the Director of Environmental Services (Agenda Item 4.0 refers)

The Chairperson, Councillor P Catney, advised that the confidential report items 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 Alderman S Skillen, seconded by Alderman J Baird, 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 and public seated in the public gallery left the Council Chamber (7.02 pm).

5.1 Carryduff Waste Recycling Centre Update  
(Report will never be made available)

Councillor G McCleave left the meeting (7.12 pm) returning at 7.17 pm).

Councillor A Gowan and Councillor C McCreedy left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (7.15 pm).

Alderman A McIntyre left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (7.15 pm).

Councillor N Parker left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (7.15 pm).

Officers responded to various comments and questions raised by Members in relation to the report. Following discussion, it was agreed that the updated report be noted.

5.2 Carryduff Waste Recycling Centre Tender Evaluation Criteria  
(Redacted report and associated appendices will be made available 1 July 2025)

Alderman S Skillen left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (7.22 pm).

Presented by the Head of Service for Waste Management and Operational Services. It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor M McKeever, and agreed to recommend that evaluation award criteria as outlined in the Officers report be approved.

5.3 Procurement of a Digital Depot IT system  
(Redacted report and appendices 5 & 6 will be made available following Council ratification, appendix 4 will never be made available)

Alderman J Baird briefly left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (7.34 pm) returning (7.36 pm).

Councillor N Parker returned to the meeting during consideration of this item of business (7.27 pm).

Alderman A McIntyre returned to the meeting during consideration of this item of business (7.29 pm).

Councillor R McLernon left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (7.32 pm).

Following the presentation of the report, the Head of Service for Waste Management and Operational Services responded to questions raised by Members. Further to discussion, it was proposed by Councillor G Hynds, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that the following be approved:

- the business plan at Appendix 4 of the report for a new route optimisation system;
- the progression and appointment of a suitable contractor through G cloud 14;
- the creation of a temporary post at PO2 to lead on project implementation; and
- virement of revenue funding from Waste Operations to IT budgets to support future contract costs.

5.4 Procurement of a Garage Inspection Pit  
(Redacted report will be made available 1 July 2025, appendix 7 will never be made available)

It was proposed by Vice-Chair, Councillor G Hynds, seconded Councillor S Burns, and agreed to recommend that the procurement of the inspection pit be approved.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor M McKeever, seconded by Councillor G McCleave, and agreed to come out of Committee and normal business was resumed.

The Chair, Councillor P Catney concluded the meeting by extending his best wishes to the incoming Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee, noting that the position would be held by a Member of the Alliance Party. He also offered his support to the incoming Chair.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.40 pm.

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Chairperson