

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL**Minutes of Meeting of the Regeneration & Growth Committee held remotely and in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn on Thursday 1st February, 2024 at 6.00 pm****PRESENT IN THE CHAMBER:**

Councillor J Laverty BEM (Chairperson)

Councillor T Mitchell (Vice Chairperson)

Aldermen J Baird, A G Ewart MBE, M Gregg and A Grehan

Councillors K Dickson, U Mackin, A Martin and C McCready

PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:

Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave

Aldermen M Guy and S P Porter

Councillors P Burke, J Gallen and N Parker

OTHER MEMBERS:

Councillor G Hynds (Council Chamber)

IN ATTENDANCE

Director of Regeneration & Growth

Head of Economic Development

Head of Planning & Capital Development

Head of Assets

Acting Head of Parks & Amenities

Member Services Officers (BS and EW)

IT Officer

Commencement of Meeting

The Chairperson, Councillor J Laverty, extended a welcome to all present at the February meeting of the Committee. He reminded those present 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 6.03 pm.

1. Apologies (00:02:44)

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Gowan.

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

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this point in the meeting.

Alderman A Grehan entered the meeting at 6.05 pm.

At this point the Chairman extended a welcome to the newly appointed Head of Assets, Leeann Vincent, who was in attendance at her first meeting of the Regeneration & Growth Committee. The Chairman conveyed good wishes to Leeann for her future with Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

3. Report of Director of Regeneration & Growth (00:04:40)

3.1 Responsible Reservoir Manager Status (00:04:50)

The Director of Regeneration & Growth outlined the background and key issues regarding a request by the DfI Rivers (the legislative authority) that the Council signs up to Responsible Reservoir Manager agreement in the absence of full implementation of the Reservoirs Act (NI) 2015. It was noted that this agreement would apply to the controlled reservoirs under the Council's jurisdiction located at Duncans Pak and Hillsborough Forest. By signing this agreement the Council would be confirming it would observe the principles of the Reservoirs Act 1975 and/or the Reservoirs Act (NI) 1975 (as applicable) at present.

A copy of the Responsible Reservoir Manager agreement had been circulated to the Committee.

The Director's report highlighted key issues relating to the Council's Local Development Plan and also the Capital programme.

The Head of Planning and Capital Development and the Director responded to questions from Members in connection with:

- planning issues which had been referred to in the report. The Head of Planning & Capital Development discussed the requirement for the Council to engage with Rivers Agency where the policy requires Reservoir Manager status to be in place or in the process of being put in place. He advised that any decision being made on any future planning applications would be treated in the same way. He also highlighted the importance of complying with this policy in order to ensure future development in the inundation areas of the reservoir could be properly considered.

3.1 Responsible Reservoir Manager Status (Cont'd)

- those developments that would be unlocked as a result of the Council signing up to the Responsible Reservoir Manager agreement. The Head of Planning & Capital Development confirmed that he was unaware of any developments impacted but undertook to prepare a report on this matter for the next meeting of the Committee, and
- cost to the Council in respect of signing up to this agreement. The Director advised that all the costs associated with this area of work would be 'costs in kind' such as the weekly inspections by the Parks and Amenities team. He also discussed the capital works associated with Duncan's Dam.

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that the Council agrees to the signing up to Responsible Reservoir Manager Agreement to achieve Responsible Reservoir Manager status.

4. Report of Head of Planning & Capital Development (00:12:06)

4.1 Public Consultation on the Review of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (00:12:15)

The Head of Planning & Capital Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with the public consultation on the Review of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure seeking participation in the public consultation process and a copy of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The report also provided a web link providing full details of the Department's public consultation.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development elaborated on the three areas of the Regulations that were being considered, namely; a review of classes of developments, pre-determination hearings and the pre-application community consultation (PACC) process. He also highlighted a number of suggested changes that were not referred to in the consultation and which were being proposed to be included in the consultation response, under 'any other comments.'

The Head of Planning & Capital Development responded to questions and comments from a number of Members in connection with the above consultation, some of which they felt should be incorporated into the Council's response, namely;

4.1 Public Consultation on the Review of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Cont'd)

- the importance of obtaining the broadest range of responses to this consultation and also of ensuring the maximum participation in the planning process as possible,
- the benefit of a review of the current threshold of 50 units for major planning applications. The Head of Service discussed the importance of pre-Application Community Consultation (PACC) which assist in informing the public of what developments were coming forward. He was hopeful that there would be a further round of consultation following the outcome of this current consultation.
- a knowledge gap that existed between certain groups and the planners/developers and the fact that the planning system is a difficult system to interact with. The Member expressed concern that this knowledge gap was a significant concern.
- the current practice of publishing the Council's planning lists in the local newspaper and the suggestion that social media may be a more suitable platform for such information to be published.

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that the Council grants delegated authority to Officers to provide comments to the Department for Infrastructure via the Citizen Space website based on the advice set out in the report circulated and taking account of the issues raised by Members, where appropriate.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Head of Planning & Capital Development undertook to bring forward a paper on the issues raised to a future meeting of the Committee. He also agreed to download a copy of the Council's final response to the Department and circulate to Members of the Committee in due course.

4.2 Proposed Abandonment at 62 to 66 Bow Street Lisburn (00:31:58)

The Head of Planning & Capital Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with the proposed abandonment at 62-66 Bow Street Lisburn by the Department for Infrastructure following a request by Danske Bank, the details of which had been outlined in the report circulated. A copy of a related plan had been appended to the Officer's report.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development, in response to a question from a Member advised that as the area of footpath at 62-66 Bow Street had been abandoned, it was up to Danske Bank to make good any works, should the Bank remove the ATM or move away from that location. He indicated that the Council could highlight any particular issues to DfI Roads should the need arise.

4.2 Proposed Abandonment at 62 to 66 Bow Street Lisburn (Cont'd)

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by the Vice Chairperson, Councillor T Mitchell, and agreed to recommend that the Council responds to DfI confirming that the Council had no objection, in principle, to the abandonment of the small part of the footpath at the location identified.

5. Any Other Business (00:33:56)

5.1 Information & Correspondence Schedule (00:34:12) Chairperson, Councillor J Laverty

The Chairperson, Councillor J Laverty drew the Committee's attention to the item on this month's Information & Noting Schedule on the subject of the Council's Major Tourism Events 2024.

The Head of Economic Development and the Director responded to a number of questions from the Committee, and also provided clarification in relation to other issues, including the importance of the Committee receiving detailed reports on the evaluation and feedback on such events which would ensure a more complete overview and which would include unsuccessful applications.

It was agreed that the outcome of the 2024 major tourism events assessment be noted.

In order to provide an opportunity for further scrutiny of future programmes, the Director undertook to bring this item of business to the Committee for noting. In addition he agreed that a review of the process and criteria be undertaken and brought back to Committee for consideration.

5.2 Tour Operators' Familiarization Trip (00:34:24) Chairperson, Councillor J Laverty

The Chairperson also highlighted the forthcoming tour operators' familiarisation trip which was taking place the following week which had been organised following the Westminster Investment event in London in September 2023. It was noted that those Members who had attended the Westminster event were invited to participate in this event.

6. Confidential Report from Director of Regeneration & Growth (01:04:39)

The Chairperson 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 (01:05:20)

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by the Vice Chairperson, Councillor T Mitchell, and agreed that the Confidential Reports be considered “in Committee” in the absence of press or members of the public. The audio recording was paused at this stage in proceedings (7.06 pm).

6.1 Acquisitions and Disposals of Land Interests including Estates Update
(Redacted report to be published following sealing at Council)

The Director of Regeneration & Growth outlined the background and key issues in regard to acquisitions and disposals of land interests and also provided an update on estate matters. The Director and the Acting Head of Parks & Amenities responded to questions from the Committee in relation to one particular land interest.

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

- a) the update regarding the purchase of 30 Blaris Road be noted, and the proposal to submit, in parallel with the Contract for Sale, a planning application for the change of use for these lands be agreed,
- b) the draft lease and the associated development agreement for Laurelhill Community College 3G sports pitch be approved, in line with the contents of the report,
- c) the release of an EOI to soccer clubs for pitch 5i at Lough Moss Leisure Centre be noted, and
- d) the matter of the lease of the sports pitch at Saintfield Road, Carryduff be referred back to the Committee for further consideration in light of the discussion that had taken place that evening. It was noted that the Acting Head of Parks & Amenities would have the necessary discussion with the current lease holder meanwhile.

6.2 City Centre Management – Relocation to the Museum
(Redacted report to be published following sealing at Council)

Alderman A Grehan left the meeting at 7.35 pm.

The Head of Economic Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with the relocation of City Centre Management to the Irish Linen Centre/ Lisburn Museum.

It was proposed by the Vice Chairperson, Councillor T Mitchell, seconded by Councillor U Mackin, and agreed that in line with delegated authority granted to the Committee by the Council at its meeting on 23 January 2024 the scheme of works and costs as outlined in the Business Case, as circulated, be agreed.

7. Any Other Confidential Business

7.1 Destination Royal Hillsborough – BRCD Funding

In response to a question from a Member, the Director of Regeneration & Growth discussed the due process and other issues in regard to the Contract for Funding for the Destination Royal Hillsborough initiative. The Head of Planning & Capital Development also addressed the Committee on related planning matters.

7.2 Issue of Correspondence

The Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to questions raised by a Member in regard to a previous decision of the Committee in November 2023 that a letter be issued. The Director advised that the correspondence in question had been approved for issue.

Councillor U Mackin left the meeting at 7.50 pm.

Resumption of Normal Business

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

Conclusion of Meeting

The Chairperson thanked everyone for their attendance and there being no further business for consideration the meeting was concluded at 7.53 pm.

Chairperson