

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL**Minutes of Meeting of the Regeneration & Growth Committee held in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn on Thursday 2nd May, 2024 at 6.03 pm****PRESENT IN THE CHAMBER:**

Councillor J Lavery BEM (Chairperson)
 Councillor T Mitchell (Vice Chairperson)
 Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave
 Aldermen J Baird, A G Ewart MBE, A Grehan and M Guy
 Councillors P Burke, K Dickson, J Gallen, U Mackin, A Martin, C McCready and N Parker

OTHER MEMBERS:

Councillor G Hynds

IN ATTENDANCE

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

Commencement of Meeting

The Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery, extended a welcome to all present at the May meeting of the Committee and 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.

1. **Apologies**

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

At the conclusion of the meeting the Chairperson advised that he received an apology from Alderman S P Porter and it was agreed that Alderman Porter's apology be accepted.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave and Alderman A G Ewart declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 5.2 Lagan Navigation Trust in view of being the Council's nominated representatives on the Lagan Navigation Trust. Completed Declaration of Interest forms by both Members were completed and submitted that evening.

3. Report of Head of Economic Development

3.1 Enterprise Support Service – Go Succeed Collaboration & Funding Agreement

The Head of Economic Development's report outlined the background and key issues in connection with the Enterprise Support Service – Go Succeed Collaboration and Funding Agreement, the match-funding for this Collaboration programme having been agreed by the Committee in October 2023.

The objectives of the Go Succeed initiative were set out in the Officer's report, it being noted that the Collaboration and Funding Agreement had been reviewed with input from the Council's solicitors.

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of:

- a) the Memorandum of Understanding from the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) that had been awarded to the lead Council (Belfast City Council) and
- b) the funding agreement which outlined the workings and obligations of the collaboration between the lead council and the other 10 councils.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Economic Development clarified the overall funding amount awarded to the lead council on behalf of the 11 councils towards this programme and the specific amount allocated to Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that the Collaboration Funding Agreement, as presented, be agreed.

3.2 Labour Market Partnership – Interim Funding Letter of Offer

The Head of Economic Development's report outlined the background and key issues in connection with the Labour Market Partnership's strategies for the next three years and action plan for the period 2024/2025, all of which formed the basis of the funding bid of the LMP for the initial 2024/2025 period. It was noted that the outcome of the funding bid for

3.2 Labour Market Partnership – Interim Funding Letter of Offer (Cont'd)

2024/2025 was anticipated to be confirmed in May/June 2024 and that Officers were working currently with DfC on an ongoing basis.

The Committee had been furnished with correspondence from the Department for Communities confirming:

- a) the 2024-25 interim funding position,
- b) that up to 25% of the administrative budget to cover the period until 30th June 2024 had been agreed by the Department, and
- c) that the level of funding for the remainder of 2024/2025 was not yet agreed.

The Head of Economic Development advised that this budgetary uncertainty was similar to the position experienced last year and advised that the Department was hopeful to be in a position to confirm the funding allocation as soon as possible.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Alderman M Guy, and agreed to recommend that the offer of interim funding from the Department for Communities be accepted.

3.3 Lisburn City Centre – Wayfinding Proposals

The Head of Economic Development's report outlined the background and key issues in connection with the Council's Wayfinding proposals.

At the outset the Head of Economic Development advised the Committee that the report had been prepared in the context of the Committee's consideration of the original Walkability strategy and also in the context of the Committee's discussion at the previous meeting of the Committee on directional signage and public toilet provision. Also, it was proposed to re-frame the Walkability strategy within the context of the Council's Open Spaces Programme as the 'City Centre Wayfinding plan.' A copy of the Lisburn City Centre Wayfinding Plan had been furnished to the Committee.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth and the Head of Economic Development responded to a number of comments and questions from Members arising from the Officer's report. In regard to the design and theme of the actual signage, the Director offered to engage with Members on the theme of the signage outside of Committee over the next number of weeks and undertook to provide sample signage. He gave an assurance that the signage for public toilet provision would be expedited.

It was proposed by Councillor J Gallen, seconded by Councillor N Parker, and agreed to recommend that:

3.3 Lisburn City Centre – Wayfinding Proposals (Cont'd)

- a) the final City Centre Wayfinding Plan be agreed
- b) Officers submit an application to the Department for Communities to bring forward initiatives in line with the action plan as outlined
- c) the commissioning of signage relating to public amenities within the City Centre be approved, which would be integrated into a wider business case for the agreed programme of work and presented to the Committee for approval.

3.4 Recent Tourism Familiarisation Trip – Interim Evaluation

The Head of Economic Development's report outlined the background and key issues in connection with the two-day Tourism Familiarisation trip which had been organised on the back of the Westminster Business Showcase and Networking event in September 2023 under the theme of 'economic opportunities around Royal Hillsborough and the wider tourism and hospitality sector across Lisburn & Castlereagh.

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of the evaluation of the tour operator familiarisation trip. It was noted that bookings had already been received for 2024 for Hillsborough Castle and Hinch Distillery.

The Head of Economic Development responded to a number of questions from the Committee in connection with key issues outlined in the report. He advised that a re-focus of the Tourism Unit was being led by the HR & OD Unit currently and that a report thereon would be presented to the Committee for consideration in due course.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave left the meeting at 6.57 pm.

Members of the Committee commended the Officers for their efforts in regard to the very positive Familiarisation trip.

It was agreed that the positive evaluation report on the tour operator familiarisation trip during 5th to 7th February 2024 be noted.

4. Report by the Director of Regeneration & Growth

4.1 Rescheduling of the June Meeting of the Regeneration & Growth Committee

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Regeneration & Growth Committee in connection with the rescheduling of the June meeting of the Committee due to the

4.1 Rescheduling of the June Meeting of the Regeneration & Growth Committee (Cont'd)

Council's proposed D-Day celebrations on 6th June 2024 which was the Committee's scheduled date. A number of options for alternative dates were set out in the report.

It was proposed by Councillor N Parker, seconded by Alderman A Grehan, and agreed that the Regeneration & Growth Committee be rescheduled to Wednesday, 5th June 2024 at 7.30 pm following the meeting of the Environment & Sustainability Committee.

5. Any Other Business

5.1 Entrepreneurs Networking Event
Alderman A Grehan

Alderman A Grehan commended the efforts of the Head of Economic Development and his team of Officers in regard to the success of the recent Entrepreneurs Networking Event.

The Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery, concurred with the sentiments expressed by Alderman Grehan and asked the Director to pass on the Committee's thanks to all involved in the organisation of this event.

5.2 Hilden Mill Development
Councillor G Hynds

The Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to comments and questions from Councillor G Hynds in connection with engagement with the developer of the Hilden Mill development project. Councillor Hynds recognised that the Regeneration & Growth Committee would have a key role in connection with the development of the Hilden Mill site.

5.3 Balmoral Show 2024
Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery

The Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery, addressed the Committee in relation to the Committee's attendance at the forthcoming Balmoral Show.

5.4 Visit to High Rise, Lisburn
Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery

The Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery, reported having had the opportunity recently to visit, on behalf of the Council, the social enterprise organisation High Rise in Lisburn and commended the excellent work of this organisation. The Chairperson encouraged Members to visit High Rise to see first-hand the fantastic work being carried out.

6. Confidential Report from Director of Regeneration & Growth

The Chairperson advised of the reasons for confidentiality for the following confidential report items:

6.1 Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme - Update

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

6.2 Lagan Navigation Trust

Confidential due to containing information relating to:

- a) the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information), and
- b) 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

In Committee

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 (7.09 pm).

6.1 Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme - Update
(Redacted Report to be published post the award of Contract – Provisional date September 2024)

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of an update on the progress of projects to date together with associated spend in connection with the Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth having responded to questions from the Committee on a number of related matters requested that Members bring forward to the appropriate Director any other ideas for projects that would fit with the above Regeneration programme. The Head of Economic Development also addressed the Committee.

A number of Members expressed thanks and appreciation to the Officers concerned for a number of successful small settlement regeneration projects across the Council area, all of which had benefited the local communities.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by the Vice Chairperson, Councillor T Mithcell, and agreed to recommend that:

6.1 Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme – Update (Cont'd)

- a) the update on the Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme be noted, and
- b) any Small Settlements slippage that remained be allocated, where possible, to eligible projects identified through the DEA workshops subject to funder agreement.

6.2 Lagan Navigation Trust

(Redacted report to be published provisionally March 2025)

The Report by the Director of Regeneration & Growth outlined the background and key issues in regard to the Lagan Navigation Trust.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor U Mackin, and agreed that the recommendations as outlined in the Report by the Director of Regeneration & Growth be approved.

7. Any Other Confidential Business

7.1 NI-NL Trade Programme

Alderman A G Ewart

The Head of Economic Development having responded to comments from Alderman A G Ewart in regard to an update on the NI-NL Trade Development Programme, indicated that a report on the trade development programme would come forward to the Committee in due course. The Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to comments by Alderman A Grehan on the matter of trade development in Cork and Galway.

7.2 Belfast City Region Deal (BRCD) Funding

Alderman A G Ewart

The Director of Regeneration & Growth having responded to a question from Alderman A G Ewart in regard to BRCD funding, advised that an update report would come forward to the Committee in due course.

7.3 International Trade Links

Alderman J Baird

Comments were noted from Alderman J Baird in connection with an item that had been circulated on the May 2024 Information & Correspondence Schedule relating to International trade links.

The Vice Chairperson, Councillor T Mitchell, left the meeting at 7.39 pm.

7.4 Update on the Re-development of Dundonald International Ice Bowl (DIIB) and Governance Issues
Alderman A Grehan

The Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to comments by Alderman A Grehan on the above re-development project and other governance issues.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor J Gallen, 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 7.54 pm.

Chairperson