

**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 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 6.15 pm****PRESENT IN THE CHAMBER:**

Alderman A Grehan (Chairperson)

Alderman A G Ewart MBE (Vice Chairperson)

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor K Dickson

Alderman J Baird

Councillors P Burke, A Gowan, J Harpur, C Kemp, J Lavery BEM, U Mackin, A Martin, C McCready and N Parker

**REMOTE ATTENDANCE:**

Alderman M Gregg

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Director of Regeneration &amp; Growth

Head of Economic Development

Head of Planning &amp; Capital Development

Head of Assets

Tourism Development Manager

Economic Development Manager

Member Services Officers (BS and EW)

IT Officer

**Commencement of Meeting**

The Chairperson, Alderman A Grehan, extended a welcome to all present at the September meeting of the Committee which was the first meeting of the Committee for the 2024/2025 year.

The Member Services Officer read out the names of Elected Members and Officers in attendance at the meeting.

The Chairperson reminded those present that the meeting was being audio recorded unless the item was being considered under confidential business and 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 Councillors J Gallen and T Mitchell.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest declared at the meeting.

3. Report of Head of Economic Development

3.1 Draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024 - 2029

The Head of Economic Development's report outlined the background and key issues in connection with the Council's draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029.

The Tourism Development Manager was in attendance in order to respond to questions from Members on the draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan for 2024-2029.

The Head of Economic Development reminded the Committee that at the June Regeneration and Growth Committee a summary version of the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan had been presented by the Tourism Manager. Feedback had been received and changes subsequently made to the wider Strategy, the detail of which had been set out in the Officer's report.

It was noted that two workshops for Committee Members had taken place - one in January 2024, and more recently in July 2024 when more information had been provided on the emerging priorities, growth targets and key strategic pillars.

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of the undernoted documents:

- Draft Summary Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029
- Draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029
- Consultation Questionnaire

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

- a) the Strategy and Action Plan be issued for an eight-week public consultation exercise,
- b) a final draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan be presented to Committee following the public consultation, and

### 3.1 Draft Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024 – 2029 (Cont'd)

- c) in addition to the Officer's recommendations,
- i) a further £50,000 be made available from a suitable budget to increase the promotion of the Council as a tourism destination, in particular in regard to the Balmoral Show and other tourist attractions, and
  - ii) consideration be given to replacing the photograph on the front of the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan document.

Comments were also noted in connection with the introduction of water bottle filling stations in Council facilities. The Head of Economic Development undertook to liaise with colleagues in Environmental Health about discussions that had taken place the previous evening at the Environment & Sustainability Committee meeting.

### 3.2 Labour Market Partnership – Final Action Plan and Funding Contract 2024-2025

The Head of Economic Development's report outlined the background and key issues in connection with the Labour Market Partnership Final Action Plan and Funding Contract 2024/2025 which was funded by the Department for Communities (DfC).

The Head of Economic Development reminded the Committee that it had considered and agreed the draft Action Plan at its meeting in June 2024 in order that the initiatives funded exclusively from the Council's match funding could proceed, and the planning for the delivery of the associated initiatives could progress subject to funding.

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of the final Action Plan along with a detailed LMP funding matrix.

It was noted from the Head of Economic Development's report that in line with the ongoing budget issues within the Department, DfC had confirmed on 7 June 2024, that while funding for 2024/25 had been secured, this would be resourced over two financial years. This grant included for the funding of the agreed proportions of resource funding of administration costs.

Further to the Officer's report, the Head of Economic Development reported verbally that the Council was now in receipt of the final Letter of Offer from the Department for Communities for the full amount of funding.

It was noted that the programmes for delivery under the LMP Action Plan 2024/25 would also feed into the Council's Performance Improvement Plan, in terms of a target of 90 people receiving support, and the delivery of a specific employment based training programme for the disabled. It was further noted that DfC had requested that the Council

### 3.2 Labour Market Partnership – Final Action Plan and Funding Contract 2024-2025 (Cont'd)

takes part in a pilot programme within projects in Lisburn and North Belfast, the aim of which was to reflect how the Labour Market Partnership in these areas had been able to access specific groups to meet employment opportunities.

In response to a request from a Member the Head of Economic Development undertook to provide the Member with analysis of the outcomes of previous Labour Market Partnership initiatives.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor C Kemp, and agreed to recommend that the final Labour Market Partnership Action Plan 2024/2025 be noted and that the associated projects proceed to delivery in view of the necessary Letter of Offer having been received.

### 3.3 Integrated Marketing Campaign Annual Review

The Head of Economic Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with the annual review of the Council's Integrated Marketing Campaign.

The Head of Economic Development advised that two marketing campaigns had been completed since awarding the tender to Rumour Mill Creative Communications last October, namely Christmas & Lisburn Light Festival 2023 and Spring 2024.

The Committee had been furnished with the following:

- an evaluation for the aforementioned campaigns, it being noted that the evaluation for Summer 2024 would be presented to a future meeting of the Regeneration and Growth Committee meeting,
- a summary page of outcomes in connection with the 2023 Campaign, and
- a summary of the outcomes of the 2024 Campaign (March/April).

The Head of Economic Development referred to the Council's emerging LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan which took stock of all the research, consultations and situation analysis to highlight experiences and things to do in the area. In particular, the Christmas and Lisburn Light Festival 2023 proved to be very successful in terms of generating new business for city centre traders and increasing the city centre's positive profile across Northern Ireland and the Republic as a shopping destination.

The Head of Economic Development responded to comments from Members in regard to:

- social media and how that equated to increased footfall,
- the benefits of using more than one radio station for advertising,

### 3.3 Integrated Marketing Campaign Annual Review (Cont'd)

- a request that consideration be given to the Council's logo being better positioned on branded advertisements
- the importance of having improved attractions as a result of increased expenditure on advertising.

It was proposed by Councillor C Kemp, seconded by Councillor U Mackin, and agreed to recommend that:

- a) the findings of the evaluations of the Christmas and Lisburn Light Festival 2023, and the Spring 2024 marketing campaign be noted,
- b) Officers commence year 3 of the tender for delivery of Integrated Marketing services, and
- c) the next 3-year period 2025-2028 of the Integrated Marketing Campaign be publicly procured.

### 3.4 Regional Tourism Partnership - Visit Belfast Annual Service Level Agreement

The Head of Economic Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with the Regional Tourism Partnership and the Visit Belfast Annual Service Level Agreement, a copy of which had been appended to the report circulated.

The Committee also had been furnished with an evaluation report which detailed the breakdown of all activity for the 2023/24 financial year, it being noted that all targets had been met from the outgoing service level agreement. The Officer's report detailed a number of the highlights from the evaluation report.

The Tourism Manager and the Director responded to questions and comments from a Member about the possibility of obtaining monthly figures on the number of enquiries about this Council area, and also in regard to the importance of Council staff being in attendance in the Visit Belfast centre on occasions in order to better promote the Council's attractions and events.

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

- a) the Council continues its long-standing membership of Visit Belfast, at a cost of £30,000 plus a further £6,500 for the 'Gold' promotional package for a further year, and

### 3.4 Regional Tourism Partnership - Visit Belfast Annual Service Level Agreement (Cont'd)

- b) the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson be nominated to participate in the Annual Industry Forum. Members were encouraged to take advantage of this facility to seek to influence the future delivery of the partnership.

## 4. Report by the Head of Planning & Capital Development

### 4.1 Council Validation Checklist Requirements

The Head of Planning & Capital Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with the requirement of the Council to develop a Validation Checklist the aim of which was to improve the quality and completeness of planning applications coming into the system. It was noted that progress was being made currently in the drafting of legislation by the Department for Infrastructure in respect of Validation Checklist requirements.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development reported that the need for a checklist was an agreed objective of the Council's Performance Improvement Plan 2024/25, and was also part of a wider programme of improvements which were to be delivered in accordance with a Service Improvement Programme which was identified in the Plan to be implemented by end of the 2024/25 business year. A copy of the draft Council Validation Checklist Requirements document had been appended to the Officer's report which also included a link to the Council's Performance Improvement Plan for 2024/2025.

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

- a) the draft Council Validation Checklist Requirements document and associated validation matrix be agreed, and
- b) the document be published to the Council website and implemented with effect from the date the proposed legislation takes effect.

### 4.2 Procedure for dealing with Section 76 Planning Agreements for Affordable Housing

The Head of Planning & Capital Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with the development of a procedure for dealing with Section 76 Planning Agreements for affordable housing. The aim of such a procedure was to improve the timeliness of the process and to ensure the responsibilities of the relevant participants were clearly understood.

#### 4.2 Procedure for dealing with Section 76 Planning Agreements for Affordable Housing (Cont'd)

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of a draft procedure had been developed setting out the obligations of the applicant for preparing the draft agreement and associated title information. The draft procedure also highlighted the actions the Council would follow on receipt of the agreement and the timescales for responding.

It was noted that the draft procedure provided detail and timescales in relation to:

- Requesting information for applicant/agent
- Receipt of draft agreement
- Post Planning Committee

The Director of Regeneration & Growth having responded to comments from a Member in regard to issues raised at the previous meeting of full Council on Section 76 agreements, referred to plans for a workshop for Members which would address the issues raised.

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

- a) the draft procedure, as circulated, for dealing with Section 76 Planning Agreements be approved, and
- b) the procedure be published on the Planning Section of the Council website.

#### 4.3 Local Development Plan 2032 – Quarterly Update

The Committee noted a report by the Head of Planning & Capital Development on the quarterly update on the Local Development Plan 2032.

The report detailed a number of on-going work areas associated with the Council's Local Development Plan and also a pilot programme in which the Plan team had been involved, the aim of which was to capture monitoring data on the amount and type of developments approved in the Council area.

The following related documents had been appended to the Officer's report:

- a) Copy correspondence from NI Water (NIW) dated on 30 July 2024 advising that within its 2024/25 budget allocation, and with a likely budget allocation in 2025/26, it would have limited ability to increase capacity for new connections to the wastewater system.

4.3 Local Development Plan 2032 – Quarterly Update (Cont'd)

- b) NIW's annual summary of wastewater capacity in the Council area. This includes a traffic light system as a clear visual representation of current wastewater capacity and future capacity based on growth. This indicates that relatively few of the treatment works are beyond, or nearing capacity. This may offer some surety for future developments.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development responded to questions from a Member in connection with on-going traffic issues in Moira and the issue of processing times for planning applications. Another Member raised the issue of planning applications for agricultural developments experiencing delays due to environmental issues. The Head of Planning & Capital Development undertook to re-circulate the most recent correspondence from DAERA which demonstrated that consultation responses were being returned on a timely basis.

It was agreed that the Local Development Plan Quarterly Update report and the appended documents be noted.

5. Report by the Director of Regeneration & Growth

5.1 Rescheduling of the February 2025 Meeting of the Regeneration & Growth Committee

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor C Kemp, and agreed to recommend that the date of the February 2025 meeting of the Committee be changed from Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025 to Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025 in order to accommodate a special meeting of Council to strike the rate.

6. Any Other Business

There was no other business raised by Members.

7. Confidential Report from Director of Regeneration & Growth

The Chairperson, Alderman A Grehan, advised that confidential report items were required to be considered under confidential business due to containing information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information). In addition the report at item 7.3 was confidential due to information likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

Alderman M Gregg left the meeting during consideration of Confidential Business.



In Committee

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor C Kemp, 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.

- 7.1 Rural Business Development Grant Scheme funded by DAERA under the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Programme (TRPSI)  
(Redacted Report to be published when funding has received Ministerial approval, estimated October 2024)

The Committee considered a report outlining the background and key issues in connection with the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme, which was funded by DAERA as part of the TRPSI Programme.

The Committee had been furnished with copy correspondence from DAERA dated 21 June 2024 by way of an update on the 2024/2025 funding position for this scheme.

It was agreed that the update report on the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme, including the correspondence from DAERA, be noted. It was also noted that local constituency networks would be utilised to promote this funding opportunity to appropriate third parties in advance of the formal call for applications.

- 7.2 BRCD Destination Royal Hillsborough  
(Redacted Report to be published post all partner governance approvals, estimated October 2024)

The Committee considered an update report on the Belfast Region City Deal’s Destination Royal Hillsborough programme.

A number of related documents in connection with the delivery of the Destination Royal Hillsborough programme had been appended to the Director’s report.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to questions from a Member on a key issue relating to the Destination Royal Hillsborough project. The Director, having noted a number of comments from other Members, undertook to provide additional information on the issues raised to Committee Members, as well as Members representing Downshire East DEA, at a pre-briefing session ahead of the forthcoming meeting of the panel Members on BRCD.

It was proposed by Councillor J Lavery, seconded by Councillor C McCreedy, and agreed to recommend that the recommendations, as set out in the report circulated, be approved.

In response to a further question the Director undertook to provide information to the Member on the Park Street matter.

7.3 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Evaluations

(Redacted Report to be published when information no longer commercially sensitive)

The Committee considered a report outlining the background and key issues in connection with the evaluations of the undernoted European Regional Development Fund (EDRF) programmes, namely:

- a) Mentor Growth Programme,
- b) Digi Growth Programme, and
- c) Sales and Export Trade Development Programme –

Copies of the full evaluation reports had been appended to the Director's report.

It was agreed that the the evaluation reports for the three above-mentioned programmes funded under the EU Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme 2014-2020 be noted.

7.4 Lease Amendment Request

(Redacted Report to be published post ratification)

The Committee considered a report outlining the background and key issues in connection with a lease amendment request by a local sporting club.

It was proposed by Councillor C Kemp, seconded by the Vice Chairperson, Alderman A G Ewart, and agreed to recommend that the Council consents to the Deed of Rectification, for the reasons as outlined in the report circulated.

7.5 Tolerton Sports Zone, Seymour Hill

(Redacted Report to be published post ratification, and signing & sealing)

Councillor A Gowan left the meeting at 7.52 pm.

The Committee considered a report detailing the background and key issues in connection with the lease for the Tolerton Sports Zone at Seymour Hill.

It was proposed by Councillor N Parker, seconded by Councillor C McCready, and agreed to recommend that the Council consents to the renewal of the lease of Tolerton Sports Zone for a further five-year term, as outlined in the report.

7.6 Leasing of Pitch, Lough Moss Leisure Centre

(Redacted Report to be published post ratification, and signing & sealing)

Councillor U Mackin and the Economic Development Manager left the meeting at 7.53 pm.

The Committee considered a report detailing the background and key issues in connection with the leasing of the sports pitch at Lough Moss Leisure Centre, Carryduff.

7.6 Leasing of Pitch, Lough Moss Leisure Centre (Cont'd)

The Director of Regeneration & Growth and the Head of Assets responded to questions from two Members in connection with leasing of Council assets and maintenance of assets that are leased.

It was proposed by the Vice Chairperson, Alderman A G Ewart, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that the Council consents to the letting of pitch number 5i at Lough Moss Leisure Centre to Carryduff Colts on the terms stated in the report with a subsequent lease being presented for signing and sealing. A copy of the signed off Business Case had been appended to the Director's report.

7.7 Unit 4C, Omni Park, Dundonald  
(Redacted Report to be published post ratification)

Councillor C McCreedy left the meeting at 8.08 pm.

The Committee considered a report in connection with the letting of Unit 4C at the Omni Park Dundonald.

It was proposed by Councillor J Laverty, seconded by Councillor C Kemp, and agreed to recommend that the new tenancy, as outlined in the report circulated, be approved.

7.8 Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields Site

The Committee considered a report outlining the background and key issues in connection with the leasing of land to a local sporting club on land adjacent to the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields.

It was proposed by Councillor C Kemp, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that the granting of a lease of the land adjacent to the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields to the sporting club concerned be approved to allow the new development to proceed.

8. Any Other Confidential Business

8.1 Update Report on CityWatch CCTV

In response to comments from a Member, the Director advised that an update report on CityWatch CCTV would come before the Committee at the earliest opportunity.

## 8.2 Update on Lisburn City Centre Toilet Provision

In response to comments from a Member, the Director advised that an update report on City Centre Toilet Provision would come before the Committee at the earliest opportunity.

### Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor J Laverty, 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 8.15 pm.

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Chairperson