

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL**Minutes of the Environment and Sustainability Committee held in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, and remotely, on Wednesday 6th September 2023 at 6.00 pm****PRESENT IN CHAMBER:**

Councillor C McCready (Chairman)

Councillor R Carlin (Vice-Chairman)

Aldermen J Baird, M Gregg and J Tinsley

Councillors S Burns, P Catney, G Hynds, P Kennedy, A McIntyre, M McKeever, R McLernon and N Parker.

PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave
Alderman S Skillen**OTHER MEMBERS:**

Councillor A Martin

IN ATTENDANCE:**In Chamber:**Acting Director of Environmental Services (RH)
Acting Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) (JK)
Head of Service (Building Control and Sustainability) (CD)
Acting Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning) (SC)
Member Services Officers (CH, RN)**Commencement of the Meeting**

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman, Councillor C McCready, welcomed those present to the meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Committee. The Chairman advised that the meeting would be audio recorded unless the item on the agenda was to be considered under confidential business. At this point, the Member Services Officer read out the names of the Elected Members and Officers in attendance at the meeting. The Chairman, Councillor C McCready, stated that, whilst the meeting was being recorded, unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per the Council's Standing Orders.

He asked that mobile phones be put on silent or switched off for the duration of the meeting. The Acting Director of Environmental Services, Mr Richard Harvey proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. Apologies (00:02:54)

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Andrew Gowan and Councillor J Lavery BEM.

2. Declarations of Interest (00:03:08)

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Report by the Head of Service (Building Control and Sustainability) (00:03:20)

3.1 Consultation on NI 2030/2040 Emissions Reduction (00:03:30)

The Committee considered a report which provided information in connection with a consultation launched by DAERA in relation to NI 2030 and 2040 Emissions Reduction Targets and First Three Carbon Budgets and Advice Report.

It was reported that the closing date for the consultation was 11th October 2023, and that a response would be brought to the October Committee meeting for approval, in advance of the closing date. Members noted that, as the consultation closing date was 11th October, there would not be time for any agreed response to be ratified at Full Council on 24th October 2023.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Alderman M Gregg, and agreed to recommend that Council delegates the authority to the October Environmental and Sustainability Committee, to agree and submit on behalf of Council, the response to Consultation on NI 2030 and 2040 Emissions Reduction Targets and First Three Carbon Budgets, and Views on Climate Change Committee Advice Report be approved.

3.2 Consultation on Proposed Amendments to Part E (Fire Safety) of The Building Regulations and Guidance (00:05:43)

The Committee considered a report which provided information in connection with a consultation launched by the Department of Finance (DoF), in relation to proposed amendments to Part E (Fire Safety) of the Building Regulations and Guidance.

Members were encouraged to forward any comments they wished to have included in the response by 12th September 2023. The Committee noted that, as the consultation had a closing date of 25th September 2023, a consultation response would be brought to the next available Environmental and Sustainability Committee meeting for retrospective approval.

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Councillor R McLernon, and agreed to recommend that the report on the Department of Finance consultation on amendments to Part E (Fire Safety) of the Building Regulations and Guidance be approved.

4. Report by the Acting Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning (00:07:23)

4.1 Adult Safeguarding Position Report (00:07:34)

The Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning), set out in her report, the key information in relation to the annual Adult Safeguarding Position Report for 2022/2023.

It was stated that the report related to incident reporting to statutory agencies, namely Health and Social Care Trusts and the PSNI, which was one of the key safeguarding requirements of the Council. A copy of the Adult Safeguarding Position Report for 2022/2023 had been circulated to Members for information.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed that the Adult Safeguarding Position Report for 2022/2023 be noted.

4.2 Enforcement Report (00:10:40)

Further to the report considered by the Committee at its meeting in March 2023, the Acting Head of Service provided an update in relation to the Council's key enforcement statistics and comparison with other Councils.

Copies of reports detailing Dog Control, Licensing, Litter and illegal Dumping Statistics had been circulated to Members for information. The Committee noted that the report did not provide direct comparisons with other Councils, as every Council carried out different levels of enforcement. Members were provided with a website link to view regional Dog Control Statistics.

In response to a comment made regarding Council use of CCTV, Alderman Tinsley congratulated Officers on the recent positive conviction which was enabled by the use of CCTV, and passed on his appreciation to Officers for their dedication on the issue.

Officers responded to a number of questions from the Committee arising from the report. Following discussion, the Committee agreed that the Enforcement Report be noted.

It was further proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Councillor A McIntyre, and agreed to recommend that a report be tabled to a future Environment & Sustainability Committee be approved, to include:

- revisit feasibility of DNA Testing to support the prevention of Dog Fouling;
- how the DNA Testing Initiative performed in Leitrim/other Councils and associated costs;
- the outcome of consideration of DNA testing by NIDAG; and
- statistics/costs on the recent dog fouling awareness campaigns, to determine the effectiveness of the campaigns.

4.3 Consultation – Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls (00:40:15)

The Committee considered a report in connection with a consultation led by the Executive Office (TEO), in relation to the new draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG).

The Acting Head of Service outlined in detail the vision, aim, key themes and required outcomes of the Strategic Framework to EVAWG. Members were provided with a copy of the draft Strategic Framework alongside the draft response to be submitted on behalf of the Council, and were encouraged to forward any comments they wished to have included in the final response by 22nd September 2023.

It was proposed by Councillor N Parker, seconded by Councillor P Catney, and agreed to recommend that the response to the draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls, to be submitted on behalf of the Council, prior to the closing date of 24th September 2023 be approved.

5. Report by the Acting Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) (00:43:37)

5.1 EPR Delay for Packaging Report (00:43:52)

The Committee considered a report which provided information in connection with the delayed implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging Payments. The Acting Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) reported that DEFRA announced on the 25th July, that new rules to ensure packaging producers paid for the cost of recycling their packaging would be deferred for one year from October 2024 to 2025.

It was further reported that a consultation had been launched on 28th July by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in Northern Ireland, along with the UK Government, Scottish Government and Welsh Government, in relation to the draft Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging and Packaging Waste) Regulations (2024).

The Committee were provided with a link to access the full consultation document for Members consideration. Members noted that as the consultation closing date was 9th October, there would not be time for any agreed response to be ratified at Full Council on 24th October 2023.

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg, seconded by Vice-Chairman, Councillor R Carlin, and agreed to recommend that:

- the update on deferred implementation of payments for household packaging waste under EPR be noted;
- Members forward any comments they had for inclusion in the Council response to the Consultation on the draft Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging and Packaging Waste) Regulations [2024] to the Waste Policy & Development Manager no later than Wednesday 13th September 2023; and

5.1 EPR Delay for Packaging Report Cont'd

- grant delegated authority for the October Environment and Sustainability Committee to consider and agree the draft response be approved.

The Chairman, Councillor C McCready, advised that Any Other Business would be considered at this point in the meeting.

6. Any Other Business (Agenda item 7.0 refers) (00:48:06)6.1 Blue/Green Algae Update
Acting Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning) (00:48:15)

The Acting Head of Service provided an update to the Committee in regards to the presence of Blue/Green Algae at Hillsborough Lake. It was reported that inspection of the water last week confirmed that the Blue/Green Algae was no longer detected, and signage advising the public to avoid contact with the Algae bloom and water had subsequently been removed. It was further reported that the lake had been inspected daily, and unfortunately further instances had been identified that evening. It was confirmed that signage would be erected the following day to advise the public.

Responding to a question from a member of the Committee, the Acting Head of Service clarified that the Council were responsible for managing Blue/Green Algae which was located on Council owned property only.

6.2 High Hedges
Alderman S Skillen (00:50:43)

Alderman S Skillen raised a query with the Council's charges for High Hedge Applications, which was cost prohibitive for many residents in comparison to other Councils. The Acting Director of Environmental Services confirmed that the Council had carried out benchmarking to ensure charges were comparable and agreed that Officers would review charges against other NI Councils and update Alderman Skillen directly.

The Committee also noted that whilst there was a charge for an application for an assessment for a high hedge, the cost of the application would transfer to the hedge owner if the application was substantiated.

6.3 HRC Site Visits
Acting Director of Environmental Services (00:58:50)

The Acting Director confirmed that site visits were planned for new Elected Members and Members of the Environment and Sustainability Committee, to provide Members an opportunity to see some of the facilities, including: the Cutts and Carryduff HRC Sites and the Depot. Members were advised that invites would be circulated once suitable dates had been identified.

6.4 Household Recycling Centre (HRC) Provision
Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave (00:59:50)

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave referred back to the June 2023 Committee meeting, where it was agreed that a report would be brought back to a future Environment and Sustainability Committee meeting around Recycling Centre provision in the LCCC area. The Deputy Mayor requested that consideration also be given to businesses when the feasibility of implementing Service Level Agreements with other Councils was explored.

An example was provided to the Committee of a business that carried out most of their work within the LCCC area but their business address was in the Belfast boundary which was causing challenges. The Acting Director agreed that consideration for businesses sitting on the LCCC boundary would be taken into consideration within the HRC Provision Report.

6.5 The Cutts HRC Traffic
Councillor P Catney (01:01:09)

Councillor P Catney highlighted his concern with the level of traffic at the access to the Cutts HRC, and the number of accidents that had taken place at the lights in close proximity to the primary school. He requested that consideration be given to implementing a temporary appointment system for the Cutts HRC during busy times of the day, which could potentially assist alleviating the traffic until the signalling system issues at that location were addressed. The Acting Director confirmed that service arrangements were under constant review and agreed that consideration would be given to the appointments option and included in the upcoming report on the Household Recycling Centres Provision.

6.6 Kerbside Waste Collection Consultation
Chairman, Councillor C McCready (01:02:28)

Councillor R McLernon left the Chamber at (7.10 pm).

In response to a question by the Chairman, Councillor C McCready, around residents access to the consultation, the Committee were advised that the Council were approaching the end of an extensive consultation process and whilst the consultation had an online presence, six drop in sessions had taken place throughout the Council area, adverts had taken place in local newspapers, Council had also engaged directly with 190 Charities/Partners and dedicated events were planned in the coming days with Age NI, Lisburn Outlook and the Macular Society. It was also reported that paper copies of the Consultation were available and had been utilised.

The Committee noted the positive response rate to the consultation, with 1,400 responses received to date.

7. Confidential Report from the Acting Director of Environmental Services (Agenda item 6.0 refers) (01:10:00)

The Chairman, Councillor C McCready, advised that the confidential report items would be dealt with “In Committee” due to (1) containing information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information), and (2) due to information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual and (3) information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

“In Committee”

It was proposed by Alderman M Gregg , seconded by Councillor A McIntyre, 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 seated in the public gallery left the meeting (7.12 pm).

7.1 ARC 21 Bring Contract Tender Award (Agenda item 6.1 refers)
(Report will not be made available)

Councillor R McLernon returned to the meeting at (7.14 pm).

The Acting Head of Service for Waste Management and Operational Services presented this item of business.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor P Kennedy, and agreed to recommend that the award of the contracts to the entities as outlined in the report, for a period of 4 years, plus option to extend for a further four years be approved, subject to the conditions as detailed in the report.

7.2 Requested Increase to Contracted Rates (Agenda item 6.2 refers)
(Redacted report to be published October 2023)

The Acting Director of Environmental Services presented this item of business. Officers responded to a number of questions from the Committee arising from the report. Further to discussion, the Committee agreed that the request for increased tender costs and the price variation be noted.

7.3 Cemetery Provision Update (Agenda item 6.3 refers)
(Report points 4 and 5 will be made available December 2023,
points 6,8 and 10 will be made available on completion of Project)

The Acting Head of Service for Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning presented this item of business and provided an update in relation to the above matter. Officers responded to a number of questions and comments from the Committee arising from the report.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor A McIntyre, and agreed to recommend that the cemetery provision recommendations as outlined in the report be approved.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Vice-Chairman, Councillor R Carlin, and agreed to come out of committee and normal business was resumed.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.37 pm.

Mayor/Chairman