

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Planning Committee Meeting held in the Council Chamber and in Remote Locations on Monday, 2 October, 2023 at 10.00 am

PRESENT IN CHAMBER:

Alderman M Gregg (Chairman)

Councillor U Mackin (Vice-Chairman)

Alderman J Tinsley

Councillors D Bassett, S Burns, P Catney, D J Craig, A Martin, G Thompson and N Trimble

IN ATTENDANCE:

Director of Regeneration and Growth
Head of Planning & Capital Development
Principal Planning Officer (RH)
Senior Planning Officers (RT and MB)
Member Services Officers

Mr B Martyn (Cleaver Fulton Rankin) – Legal Advisor

Commencement of Meeting

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman, Alderman M Gregg, welcomed those present to the Planning Committee. He pointed out that, unless the item on the agenda was considered under confidential business, this meeting would be audio recorded. He went on to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. **Apologies** (00:02:08)

It was agreed to accept an apology for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of Alderman O Gawith.

At this point, the Member Services Officer read out the names of the Elected Members and Officers in attendance at the meeting.

Councillor N Trimble arrived to the meeting (10.04 am).

2. **Declarations of Interest** (00:03:24)

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of Meeting of Planning Committee held on 4 September, 2023** (00:03:53)

It proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Councillor D Bassett and agreed that the minutes of the meeting of Committee held on 4 September, 2023 be confirmed and signed.

4. Report from the Head of Planning & Capital Development (00:04:10)

4.1 Schedule of Applications (00:04:26)

The Chairman, Alderman M Gregg, advised that a significant amount of representation had been received in respect of applications on the schedule and a number of legal points required to be addressed.

“In Committee”

It was proposed by Councillor U Mackin, seconded by Councillor D Bassett and agreed to go ‘into committee’ in order that legal advice could be sought. Those members of the public in attendance left the meeting (10.06 am).

Advice was provided by the Legal Advisor in respect of a number of representations received as either late objections or in support of speaking requests for this meeting. It was explained that further legal advice should be sought from Senior Counsel. Members’ comments were noted regarding the importance of reviewing procedures to ensure timely receipt of representations in the future.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor D Bassett, seconded by Councillor G Thompson and agreed to come out of committee and normal business was resumed (10.52 am).

The Chairman, Alderman M Gregg, stated that, on the advice of the Legal Advisor, it was necessary to postpone consideration of the schedule of applications at today’s meeting to consider the legal advice of Senior Counsel in respect of the representations received since last Friday and to provide the Committee with updated reports as required. This was proposed by Councillor P Catney, seconded by Councillor D Bassett and agreed.

The Chairman, Alderman M Gregg, advised that the schedule of applications would be considered at a reconvened meeting of the Planning Committee on Monday, 9 October 2023 at 3.00 pm.

Adjournment of Meeting

The Chairman, Alderman M Gregg, declared the meeting adjourned for a comfort break at this point (10.53 am).

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting was resumed at 11.02 am.

4.2 Statutory Performance Indicators – July and August 2023 (00:06:23)

Councillor P Catney left the meeting at 11.05 am.

4.2 Statutory Performance Indicators – July and August 2023 (Contd)

Members were provided with a copy of statutory performance indicators for July and August 2023. It was proposed by Councillor D Bassett, seconded by Councillor D J Craig and agreed that these be noted.

Arising from discussion, the Head of Planning & Capital Development agreed that notification would be sent to agents advising that the Local Development Plan had been adopted. This would be on a wider scale of circulation than was previously the case when agents were advised about the publication of the Direction for the emerging Plan.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development also took on board comments made about the planning application validation process and explained that, as part of the overall improvement of the planning system, the Department for Infrastructure had given a commitment that validation checklists would be implemented on a statutory basis. Until that was the case, this matter remained an issue in terms of the Council's performance statistics.

4.3 Northern Ireland Annual Statistics – Annual Statistical Bulletin (April 2022 – March 2023) (00:18:26)

Members were provided with a copy of the Northern Ireland Annual Statistical Bulletin, as well as an analysis of the bulletin relative to Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council. It was proposed by Alderman J Tinsley, seconded by Councillor D Bassett and agreed that this information be noted.

Comments were made about the fact that renewable energy statistics included only applications for wind turbines and it would be preferable if statistics included applications for all types of renewable energy. The Head of Planning & Capital Development explained that a group had been formed following the publication of the Public Accounts Committee Report and the Review of Planning by the Northern Ireland Audit Office. That group had been tasked to provide a new set of performance indicators to the Department for consideration.

4.4 Review of Scheme of Delegation (00:25:10)

Members were provided with a copy of a final draft of the Scheme of Delegation. It was proposed by Councillor G Thompson, seconded by Councillor D Bassett and agreed to note that this would be issued to the Department for Infrastructure for approval, subject to agreement at the Corporate Services Committee.

4.5 Notification by Telecommunication Operator(s) of Intention to Utilise Permitted Development Rights (00:26:20)

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Councillor D Bassett and agreed to note from the report, information regarding notification by telecommunication operators to utilise Permitted Development Rights at various locations.

Following discussion during which concerns were raised regarding the erection of poles, it was agreed that the Head of Planning & Capital Development write to the

4.5 Notification by Telecommunication Operator(s) of Intention to Utilise Permitted Development Rights (Contd)

Department requesting that telecommunications companies be encouraged to share existing infrastructure to avoid unnecessary duplication of equipment. He advised that he would raise this matter at a forthcoming meeting of the Strategic Planning Group and write to the Department thereafter. He also stated that, as this was a regional issue, there required to be a wider discussion as to the need to update the general permitted development regulations in line with, and to take account of, current technology; although he pointed out that any change would be a matter for the Department to review.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development further agreed to (a) advise Councillor Bassett if the new telecommunications apparatus to be installed at Old Dundonald Road, Belfast, was a 5g mast pole; and (b) give consideration to the request that Members be provided with maps indicating the proposed locations of telecommunications apparatus as part of the normal reports to Committee.

5. Any Other Business (00:37:38)

5.1 January Committee Meeting (00:37:46)

The Chairman, Alderman M Gregg, advised that, as the normal date of the January meeting of the Planning Committee fell on a bank holiday, the Committee would meet on Monday, 8 January, 2024.

Conclusion of the Meeting

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chairman, Alderman M Gregg, thanked those present for their attendance and reminded Members that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Monday, 9 October at 3.00 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting was terminated at 11.34 am.

Chairman/Mayor