

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of the Communities & Wellbeing Committee held remotely and in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn on Tuesday 3rd September 2024 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT IN COUNCIL CHAMBER (COMMITTEE):

Alderman H Legge (Acting Chair)

Aldermen A Grehan, A McIntyre and P Porter

Councillors D Bassett, T Beckett, J Gallen, B Higginson, C Kemp, S Lowry, G McCleave, T Mitchell and G Thompson

PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION (COMMITTEE)

Alderman S Skillen

OTHER MEMBERS OF COUNCIL PRESENT IN COUNCIL CHAMBER

Councillors P Catney, A Gowan and G Hynds

IN ATTENDANCE:

Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing
Head of Communities
Head of Sports Services
Acting Head of Parks & Amenities
Member Services Officers (RN & EW)

Chair

In the absence of the Chairman of the Committee, Councillor J Craig, the meeting was chaired by the Vice-Chair – Alderman H Legge.

Alderman Legge advised Members that Councillor Craig was not in attendance as his daughter had been married earlier in the day. Best wishes were extended to the Craig family on this happy occasion.

Alderman H Legge welcomed those present to the meeting, in particular those Members who had not previously served on the Communities & Wellbeing Committee.

1. Terms of Reference of Communities & Wellbeing Committee

The Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing made a short presentation by means of PowerPoint on the Terms of Reference of the Communities & Wellbeing Committee.

1. Terms of Reference of Communities & Wellbeing Committee (Continued)

The Terms of Reference had previously been furnished to Members and they were also available in the Resources Section of Decision Time.

Alderman S Skillen was attending the meeting on a remote basis. As she was experiencing technical difficulties in hearing the presentation, the Director stated that she would make contact with Alderman Skillen to clarify any aspects of the Terms of Reference on which she might have questions.

Councillor C Kemp entered the Chamber during the presentation. (6.11 pm)

Councillor G Hynds entered the Chamber at the conclusion of the presentation. (6.15 pm).

2. Commencement of Meeting/Housekeeping Announcements

The Acting Chair reminded Members that attendance at meetings could now be on a remote basis as well as in person. The names of those Elected Members who were in attendance at the meeting, both in person and on a remote basis, were read out by the Member Services Officer.

The meeting would be audio recorded unless the item on the agenda was to be considered under confidential business. Unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per 8.5 of the Council's Standing Orders. Mobile phones were to be turned off or on silent mode for the duration of the meeting.

The Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency. The Acting Chair asked that any Member entering or leaving the meeting alert the Member Services Officer accordingly so that this might be accurately reflected in the minutes.

3. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of Councillor J Craig (Chair of Committee); and The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Councillor K Dickson.

4. Declarations of Interest

The Acting Chair invited Members to declare any interests they might have in relation to the business of the meeting and reminded them of the requirement that they complete Declaration of Interest forms in this regard which had been provided with the papers for the meeting and which were also available in the Chamber.

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

5. Deputations

There were no deputations.

6. Report of Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing

6.1 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council – Events Calendar

The Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing reported on the calendar of events delivered by the Council on an annual basis and, in this regard, the calendar of forthcoming events up to the 24th December 2024 was provided. This document was live in nature and would be updated and reviewed on a continual basis.

Members also noted that Officers were working with Corporate Communications in order to develop a dedicated web page for events.

An Equality/Good Relations Screening Document and a Rural Needs Impact Assessment Document were also provided and noted.

It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Alderman S Skillen and agreed to recommend that the calendar of events and the development of a dedicated web page for events be noted.

The provision of the calendar was welcomed by Members. A number of Members expressed the hope that more events in the Castlereagh East and South DEAs might be organised and then included in the calendar.

Councillor D Bassett referred to the Christmas Market in Carryduff and asked that the use of the car park of a local Church be requested so as to increase car parking facilities on the day.

Councillor G McCleave asked that all staff be provided with the calendar of events.

7. Report of Head of Communities

7.1 Community Support Programme 2024-2025
Extension of Letter of Offer

In addition to the narrative report of the Head of Service in regard to the above matter, the Committee was provided with copy of a letter dated the 14th June 2024 from the Department for Communities (Voluntary & Community Division).

The letter advised that - in regard to 2024/2025 - the current baseline allocations to funded VCS (Voluntary & Community Sector) organisations would be protected and that a 5% uplift based on the Council's last year opening position would also be provided.

7.1 Community Support Programme 2024-2025
Extension of Letter of Offer (Continued)

It was proposed by Alderman P Porter, seconded by Alderman A Grehan and agreed to recommend that the Head of Service's report and the content of the letter from the Department for Communities be noted.

An Equality/Good Relations Screening Document was provided and noted.

7.2 Draft Good Relations Action Plan 2024-2025

In her narrative report, the Head of Service reported extensively on the District Council Good Relations Programme which is delivered as part of the Executive's wider "Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) Strategy".

The report covered the funding mechanism of the Council's good relations programme which is conditional on the submission of a Good Relations Action Plan to the Executive Office. A request for funding, accompanied by an agreed Good Relations Action Plan, had been submitted in December 2023. The Executive Office had since informed the Council that the requested amount of funding could not be provided, and it had advised of the revised allocation. To address this reduced budget, the Action Plan required to be revised. In her report, the Head of Service explained where the revisions would be made, and the revised draft Action Plan was provided. The Head of Service pointed out that whilst the budget for 2024/2025 was reduced, it was still an increase on the 2023/2024 budget.

An Equality/Good Relations Screening Document and a Rural Needs Impact Assessment Document were also provided and noted.

A Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor N Parker on the subject of Good Relations had been presented to Council on the 27th August 2024. The Head of Service advised that the preparation of her committee report had pre-dated the hearing of the motion, however the draft Good Relations Action Plan as presented did in fact uphold the general principles of the Notice of Motion.

Councillor G Thompson asked that the draft Action Plan include reference to those groups of young persons from specific demographics such as young persons who perform caring duties and young persons from areas of social and economic deprivation. The Head of Service agreed to amend the draft Action Plan accordingly. The section in question related to the encouragement of youth leadership.

It was proposed by Councillor G Thompson, seconded by Councillor S Lowry and agreed to recommend that – subject to the inclusion of reference to young persons from particular demographics as referred to above – the revised draft Good Relations Action Plan 2024/2025 and its associated budget be approved, and be submitted to the Executive Office.

7.2 Draft Good Relations Action Plan 2024-2025 (Continued)

Officers were commended for the amount of work that had gone into the preparation of the draft Good Relations Action Plan.

7.3 Lisburn & Castlereagh Age Friendly Strategy & Action Plan 2024/25

Councillor A Gowan entered the Chamber during presentation of this item of business. (6.31 pm)

The Head of Service reported on the “Age Friendly” activities and outreach within the Council, the Council having been recognised as an “Age Friendly City” by the World Health Organisation since March 2018. An Age Friendly Officer is employed by the Council, funded by the Public Health Agency.

To re-affirm its commitment to improving the lives of older residents through membership of the WHO’s Age Friendly Framework, the Council is required to develop a revised Age Friendly Strategy & Action Plan every three years.

Members were provided with a draft Age Friendly Strategy & Action Plan for 2024-2026, the draft being subject to presentation and design revisions. The Head of Service outlined the nature of consultation which had taken place in the preparation of the draft Strategy.

It was proposed by Councillor G Thompson, seconded by Councillor T Beckett and agreed to recommend that:-

- the content of the Head of Service’s narrative report be noted;
- the Age Friendly Strategy & Action Plan for 2024-2026 be adopted.

Councillor G Thompson – the Council’s Age Friendly Champion – paid tribute to the contribution made by the previous Age Friendly Champion, Alderman A Grehan. Councillor Thompson and other Members thanked the Age Friendly Officer and other Council officers for the work put into this part of the Council’s activities.

Councillor P Catney entered the Chamber at the conclusion of this item of business. (6.37 pm)

7.4 Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Consultation – “Building Safer Communities Together: Community
Safety Strategy 2025-2030”
(Closing date: 30th September 2024)

The above consultation is available at [The Housing Executive - Consultations \(nihe.gov.uk\)](https://www.nihe.gov.uk) and – in her report – the Head of Service outlined its strategic priorities.

The Committee was provided with a draft response to the consultation.

7.4 Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Consultation – “Building Safer Communities Together: Community
Safety Strategy 2025-2030”
(Closing date: 30th September 2024) (Continued)

The Head of Service noted comments that the following issue should be addressed with reference to it being made in the consultation response or via an appropriate channel regarding “care in the community” as a supporting factor:-

- the policy whereby housing rights could only be transferred on one occasion, thereby leading to a possible scenario whereby a person who had perhaps lived in the house all his/her life (with parents) could find him or herself without a home if the single housing rights transfer had already taken place.

It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Councillor G McCleave and agreed to recommend that the draft response to the NIHE consultation entitled “Building Safer Communities Together: Community Safety Strategy 2025-2030” be accepted as the Council’s response thereto and be submitted to the NIHE by the stipulated closing date.

7.5 Community Bursary Scheme 2024/2025 – Outcomes to Date

The DEA Local investment Programme 2024/2025 had been agreed in March 2024. Subsequent to that, the criteria for the Bursary Scheme had been agreed in April 2024 with the Head of Service, in consultation with the Committee chair and vice-chair, having delegated authority to consider applications received on an ongoing basis. Applications received and the outcome of their assessment would be provided to the Committee via the Noting Schedule.

It was agreed to recommend that the schedule of applications under the Community Bursary Scheme, together with their outcomes, be noted.

7.6 Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum

7.6.1 ART Fund Going Places Programme

The Head of Service reported on the ART Fund Going Places Programme from which it was noted that:-

- Lisburn Museum had partnered with other museums in Great Britain to create the “Communities of Making” Network;
- in collaboration with the Network partners, preparation was ongoing to enable the ART Fund to submit a bid to the National Lottery Fund. The bid entitled “Communities of Making” would seek to finance a delivery phased programme from 1st January 2025 to 29th December 2029.

7.6.1 ART Fund Going Places Programme (Continued)

If successful, Lisburn Museum would develop a textile community programme and co-curate, with network partners, two travelling exhibitions over the five-year programme.

7.6.2 Heritage Crafts Association
President's Award for Endangered Crafts

The Committee noted that the Temporary Handloom Weaver based at the Lisburn Museum had been selected as one of three finalists for the Heritage Crafts Association's President's Award for Endangered Crafts.

The winner of the award would receive £3,000.00 and – should the Council's employee be successful – the prize money would be used to purchase a licence and training for design software that would allow the Temporary Handloom Weaver, museum visitors and schools to design napkins for weaving on the Museum's 19th century jacquard looms.

The winner of the award would be announced at a Winners' Reception at Eltham Palace, London on the 26th November 2024.

It was proposed by Alderman A McIntyre, seconded by Councillor J Gallen and agreed to recommend that the costs associated with the attendance of the Temporary Handloom Weaver, the Chair of Committee or his nominee, and appropriate Officers, at the Winners' Reception at Eltham Palace, London on the 26th November 2024 be approved.

Alderman McIntyre congratulated the Temporary Handloom Weaver on this achievement, and commended the work of the Lisburn Museum/Irish Linen Centre.

8. Report of Head of Parks & Amenities (Acting)

8.1 Request for use of Wallace Park, Lisburn
and Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields (The Brambles)

Members had been provided with copies of the undernoted items of correspondence requesting the use of Wallace Park, Lisburn and Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields as set out below:-

- letter dated the 5th August 2024 from the Junior Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland seeking the use of Wallace Park and its car park on the 31st May 2025 to host a parade commemorating the centenary of organised Junior Orangeism in Ireland;

8.1 Request for use of Wallace Park, Lisburn and Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields (The Brambles) (Continued)

- Outdoor Events Booking Request Form from the South Antrim Combine of Orange Districts seeking the use of Wallace Park and the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields (The Brambles) on the 12th July 2025 to host the annual 12th July commemorations. Wallace Park would be used as the assembly field and the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields as the demonstration field. Access to both facilities was being requested from the 11th July 2025.

An Equality/Good Relations Screening Document was provided and noted.

It was proposed by Councillor B Higginson, seconded by Alderman A McIntyre and agreed to recommend that - subject to the conditions as set out under item 1.4 of the report being met to the satisfaction of the Council's Safety Advisory Group – the requests from (i) the Junior Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland and (ii) the South Antrim Combine of Orange Districts, be acceded to.

By way of information, the Acting Head of Service reported that authority had been granted for the hosting of two events on Council property during the summer months as follows:-

- Derriaghy District No. 11 LOL - 12th July demonstration at Killeaton Open Space;
- Lisburn Féile Fun Day at Wallace Park on 26th July 2024.

9. Report of Head of Sports Services

9.1 Canal Boxing Academy Fundraising Gala Ball – Europa Hotel, Belfast – 14th September 2024

In addition to the narrative report of the Head of Service, Members were provided with copy of a letter from the Canal Boxing Academy, Lisburn (received on the 7th August 2024) asking that the Council consider sponsoring a table for 10 persons at its charity boxing ball being held in the Europa Hotel, Belfast on the 14th September 2024. The cost of the table for 10 persons was £800.00.

The proceeds of the gala dinner would go towards the Academy's development of a sports hub at the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields which the Council has supported through the Community Investment Fund and the Peace Plus workstreams.

An Equality/Good Relations Screening Document was provided and noted.

9.1 Canal Boxing Academy
Fundraising Gala Ball – Europa Hotel, Belfast – 14th September 2024
(Continued)

It was proposed by Councillor C Kemp, seconded by Councillor T Mitchell and agreed that the Council sponsor a table for 10 persons at the Canal Boxing Academy's charity boxing ball being held in the Europa Hotel, Belfast on the 14th September 2024 at a cost of £800.00.

10. Any Other Business – Non-Confidential

10.1 Dundonald International Ice Bowl - Update
Councillor S Lowry

Councillor S Lowry enquired as to when the next update would be made to Committee in regard to the redevelopment of the Dundonald International Ice Bowl.

The Director advised that an update would be presented to the October meeting of Committee, but that Councillor Lowry could speak with her in advance of that if so required.

10.2 European Heritage Open Days (14th & 15th September 2024)
Alderman A McIntyre

At the Council meeting held on the 24th September 2024, it was agreed that a paragraph be added. Penultimate paragraph is the addition.

Alderman A McIntyre referred to a number of buildings within the Council's area that were part of the European Heritage Open Days on the 14th & 15th September 2024.

Alderman McIntyre expressed the hope that more buildings in Lisburn City Centre might be included in the 2025 programme as their inclusion would help to promote tourism.

Alderman McIntyre requested that Officers from the Communities & Wellbeing Directorate and also the Regeneration & Growth Directorate engage actively with local churches and historical buildings across the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area to encourage them to apply to Heritage Open Days 2025. Alderman McIntyre also made comment in relation to the Lisburn Museum submitting an application to be included in this programme of events.

The Director noted these comments for appropriate action through the Regeneration & Growth Committee, City Centre Management etc.

10.3 Hilden War Memorial – Additional Inscriptions
Councillor G Hynds

Councillor G Hynds enquired as to when additional inscriptions might be made to Hilden War Memorial.

Whilst this was a matter for the Corporate Services Committee, the Director agreed to ascertain the current position with regard to Hilden War Memorial and the other war memorials and to ask Finance & Corporate Services' colleagues to revert to Councillor Hynds accordingly.

10.4 Four Winds Community Group – “Big Community Lunch”
Councillor J Gallen

Councillor J Gallen congratulated the Four Winds Community Group on their recent “Big Community Lunch” in Colby Park on the 17th August 2024. Councillor Gallen also thanked the Council officers and the PSNI for their assistance which had resulted in a successful community day.

10.5 12th July 2025 – Dundonald
Alderman S Skillen

Alderman S Skillen referred to Dundonald being a venue for a district 12th July commemoration in 2025 and asked that Council officers engage with the brethren of Dundonald Orange Hall as to any assistance that could be offered both in regard to the 12th July commemoration itself and also a beacon in the park event which it was holding as part of the celebrations.

The Director agreed to discuss this matter off-line with Alderman Skillen.

10.6 Consultation on Access – Billy Neill Park
Alderman S Skillen

Alderman S Skillen enquired as to when the consultation on access was due to commence regarding the Billy Neill Park.

The Acting Head of Parks & Amenities agreed to revert to Alderman Skillen on this matter.

11. Confidential Report from Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing

The reason for confidentiality was as set out in the agenda, ie:-

11.1 Hanging Baskets

(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information.)

Report to be available in March 2025.

In Committee

It was proposed by Councillor T Mitchell, seconded by Councillor D Bassett and agreed that the Confidential Report of the Director be considered "in Committee". (Recording was paused at this stage in proceedings, and any members of the press and public left the meeting.)

11.1 Hanging Baskets

Presented by the Acting Head of Parks & Amenities.

In addition to the narrative report of the Acting Head of Service, the Business Case for the provision of Hanging Baskets had been provided. An Equality/Good Relations Screening Document and a Rural Needs Impact Assessment Document were also provided and noted.

The Director and the Acting Head of Service responded to Members' questions.

It was proposed by Councillor T Mitchell, seconded by Councillor T Beckett and agreed to recommend that:-

- the report on the provision of Hanging Baskets be noted;
- the Business Case for the provision of Hanging Baskets be noted;
- Option 1 as contained in the report of the Acting Head of Parks & Amenities be accepted;
- the provision of Hanging Baskets continue to be reviewed in line with the Estimates' process.

The Director took on board the following suggestions:-

- that a future report be made to Committee on the provision of alternative floral displays, such as flower beds, rose beds etc;
- flower planting in the Council's area be considered by the Age Friendly Champion as an activity for senior citizens.

12. Any Other Business – Confidential

12.1 Dundonald International Ice Bowl – Opening hours of café Alderman S Skillen

Alderman S Skillen asked that the opening hours of the café at Dundonald International Ice Bowl be examined when the service was next out to tender. Alderman Skillen considered that opening hours should be extended to cater for persons using the facility in the evening.

The Director took note of these comments.

Councillor P Catney left the Chamber during this item. (7.15 pm)

12.2 Costs associated with Government funded activities of Council
Alderman P Porter

Alderman P Porter referred to the budgets provided by Central Government to part-fund some of the Council's activities, such as Good Relations, and requested that a value-based exercise be undertaken to appreciate the outcomes of work delivered by staff.

The Director undertook to discuss this matter off-line with Alderman Porter.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Alderman P Porter, seconded by Alderman A McIntyre and agreed to come "out of Committee". Normal business and audio recording were resumed.

13. Any Other Business

There were no further items raised.

The meeting concluded at 7.20 pm.

MAYOR/CHAIR