

**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 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2024 at 6.00 pm****PRESENT IN THE CHAMBER:**

Councillor J Lavery BEM (Chairperson)

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Gowan

Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave

Aldermen A G Ewart MBE and M Guy

Councillors P Burke, K Dickson, U Mackin, A Martin, C McCready and N Parker

**OTHER MEMBERS:**

Councillor G Hynds

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Director of Regeneration & Growth  
 Head of Economic Development  
 Head of Planning & Capital Development  
 Head of Assets  
 Member Services Officers (BS and CR)  
 IT Officer

**Commencement of Meeting**

The Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery, extended a welcome to all present at the March 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 Vice Chairperson, Councillor T Mitchell, Aldermen J Baird, A Grehan, M Gregg and S P Porter and Councillor J Gallen.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this point in the meeting.

3. Report of Head of Economic Development

3.1 NI Enterprise Support Service (ESS) – ‘Go Succeed’ – Business Support Small Grant

Councillor U Mackin entered the meeting at 6.05 pm.

The Head of Economic Development’s report outlined the background and key issues in connection with the new NI Enterprise Support Service, branded as ‘Go-Succeed’ for which funding had been received through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) with match-funding from the 11 Councils and led by Belfast City Council (BCC).

An appended paper outlined a detailed overview of the ‘Go Succeed’ Grant Support Programme and included the criteria for applying and the allocation of funding along with the number of grants available for Lisburn and Castlereagh businesses.

The Head of Economic Development responded to questions from two Members in connection with the Officer’s recommendation that grants be paid in retrospect based on evidence of vouched expenditure, and also the estimated turnaround time for the issue of grants to businesses.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth also addressed the Committee in regard to the issues raised. He also highlighted current resource issues within the Economic Development Unit.

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

- a) the update on the new Enterprise Support Service be noted,
- b) the post receipt grant award approach be approved, and
- c) further reports on the roll-out of ‘Go Succeed’ be brought forward to Committee in due course.

3.2 Car Park Strategy Refresh

The Head of Economic Development’s report outlined the background and key issues in connection with the proposed refresh of the Car Park Strategy and Action Plan which had been agreed in June 2019 following a period of public consultation. A copy of the final document had been appended to the report. The Head of Economic Development

### 3.2 Car Park Strategy Refresh (Cont'd)

highlighted the significance of the change in the wider economic context and the plans of third-party stakeholders having been updated in view of the overall potential reduction in the requirement for parking across the working week.

The Head of Economic Development and the Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to a number of questions and concerns from the Committee in connection with issues that were referenced in the report, including:

- a) the cost of the refresh of the car park strategy
- b) timeframe for the refresh exercise particularly in view of the length of time taken to progress the initial strategy, and
- c) the specific data that would be gathered by consultants over and above any data already gathered by the Environmental Services Unit. The Director referred to the likely work patterns by the consultants in gathering the required information and also highlighted again the resource issues within the Economic Development Unit.

During the above discussion the Head of Planning & Capital Development also addressed the Committee in relation to the synergies between the Council's Car Park strategy and the Department for Infrastructure's (DfI) Eastern Transport Plan 2035, it being noted that the refresh of the Council's Car Park Strategy was timely in view of DfI's Transport Plan.

It was proposed by Councillor N Parker, seconded by Councillor K Dickson, and agreed to recommend that a refresh of the Car Park Strategy and Action Plan as outlined in the report be agreed.

Councillor K Dickson left the meeting at 6.36 pm.

### 3.3 Notice of Motion on EV Charging

The Head of Planning & Capital Development led on this item of business.

The undernoted Notice of Motion in relation to EV charging, in the name of Alderman M Gregg, had been referred to Committee at the meeting of Council held on 23 January 2024.

"That this Council recognises the problem with Electric Vehicle car charging specific to Northern Ireland, both for homeowners restricted to on-street parking and also with the limited availability of our public charging network; and that this council write to the Department for Infrastructure separately on both issues:

### 3.3 Notice of Motion on EV Charging (Cont'd)

1. to ask the Department for Infrastructure to initiate a trial of gully channel and/or overhead street solutions to enable safe cable crossing of a public footpath, and to ask for a consultation with disability sectors on this; and
2. to ask the Department for Infrastructure to investigate extending permitted development planning laws to include Electric Vehicle infrastructure under permitted development and standard Utility street licences.”

The Head of Planning & Capital Development provided clarification on the issue of development that was permitted under Parts 13 and 28 of the Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (2015) for Councils and the Crown to install electric Charging Points, a copy of the Order having been circulated to the Committee. It was noted that Part 3 of the Order, which deals with minor operations, had been subsequently amended in 2020 to permit the installation of off-street and on-street electrical outlets mounted on wall and/or in upstands for recharging electric vehicles, a copy of which had also been circulated. The Head of Planning & Capital Development maintained that there was sufficient scope within the Order as amended in 2020 to allow for the majority of new installations but that it was still appropriate to exercise control in relation to the size of the equipment used for recharging in sensitive locations.

Councillors G Hynds and C McCready left the meeting at 6.36 pm and 6.39 pm respectively.

In the absence of Alderman M Gregg, Councillor N Parker wished to formally propose the Notice of Motion on EV Charging.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development responded to a related question from a Member.

It was proposed by Councillor N Parker, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, and agreed to recommend that:

- a) the Notice of Motion on the subject of EV Charging be agreed and that Officers write to the Department for Infrastructure to ask that they consider and provide a response to the issues highlighted in the Notice of Motion, and in addition and in light of the clarification provided by the Head of Planning & Capital Development, Officers also ask the Department that they engage with the market to understand any perceived impediments in applying the requirements of the Order to ensure that the installation of more charging points can be sped up, and
- b) a letter be issued to Derry City and Strabane District Council to ask if the points raised could be considered for inclusion in the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) as a variation or if there was a requirement for a separate procurement for

### 3.3 Notice of Motion on EV Charging (Cont'd)

additional facilities. It was understood that the invitation to tender (ITT) documents for the ORCS had been prepared for the market.

Councillors G Hynds and C McCready returned to the meeting at 6.42 pm.

### 3.4 Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Action Plan 2023/2024 Update

The Head of Economic Development outlined the background and key issues in relation to an update on the Labour Market Partnership Action Plan 2023/2024. The report detailed the success and costs associated with the undernoted programmes, including changes to

- Repeat of Female Returners Programme – Classroom Assistants (Strand 1)
- Digital Academy
- Transport Academy
- SIA Academy (Security Industry Authority)

In response to a question from a Member the Head of Economic Development provided clarification in relation to the budget for the SIA Academy.

The Chairperson, Councillor J Laverty, paid tribute to the team of Officers in the Economic Development Unit for the work that they were undertaking on the LMP initiative. He also referred to the LMP questionnaire that had been issued to Committee Members by one of the Project Officers and advised that although the survey had closed the team would appreciate any further feedback received from Members.

It was agreed that the changes to the LMP programme budget as a result of identified underspends within the Programme and the successful achievement of additional grant income from DfC, as outlined, be noted.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, left the meeting at 6.49 pm

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

### 4.1 Department for Infrastructure (DfI) A Call for Evidence of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) on the Issue of Climate Change

The Head of Planning & Capital Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with the above call for evidence which was part of the process of gathering the necessary information to inform a focussed review of the SPPS in relation to Climate Change and the options and scope for such a review. It was noted that the deadline for responses was 5.00 pm on Thursday 28 March 2024.

4.1 Department for Infrastructure (DfI) A Call for Evidence of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) on the Issue of Climate Change (Cont'd)

The Head of Planning & Capital Development's report detailed a number of key work streams that the Department had high-lighted as being of relevance in the context of climate change, namely;

- Water (Flood Risk Management)
- Transport
- Planning
- LCCC Plan Strategy 2023 - Strategic Policy 01 – Sustainable Development

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of questions posed by DfI in the call for evidence which included the proposed responses that had been prepared by Officers.

It was proposed by Alderman M Guy, seconded by Councillor U Mackin, and agreed to recommend that:

- (a) the draft responses to the seven questions put forward by DfI in relation to the call for evidence for climate change and the SPPS be approved, and
- (b) delegated authority be granted to Officers to allow the response to issue within the specified timescale based on the appended draft responses.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, returned to the meeting at 6.52 pm.

4.2 Local Development Plan 2032 Revised Timetable

The Head of Planning & Capital Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with a revised timetable in respect of the Council's Local Development Plan 2032.

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of the revised Local Development Plan timetable which set out the key stages and the indicative timeframe for the production of the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's new Local Development Plan 2032.

The Report detailed a number of issues that may affect production of the Plan in accordance with the timetable.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development and the Director of Regeneration & Growth responded to comments from two Members in connection with the Council's LDP process.

Councillor P Burke left the meeting at 6.59 pm and returned at 7.03 pm.

Councillor C McCreedy left the meeting at 7.03 pm.

#### 4.2 Local Development Plan 2032 Revised Timetable (Cont'd)

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, seconded by Councillor A Martin, and agreed to recommend that in order to allow consultation with the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) and the other consultation bodies with an interest in the Plan making process, in advance of seeking approval from DfI, the revised timetable, including indicative dates for publication and adoption of the Local Policies Plan (LPP), be agreed.

### 5. Any Other Business

#### 5.1 Council's Tourism Strategy Councillor U Mackin

In response to an enquiry from Councillor U Mackin, the Head of Economic Development advised that a report on the Council's Tourism Strategy would be brought to Committee at the April meeting of the Committee, or the May meeting latest.

#### 5.2 LCCC Jobs Fair Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery

The Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery, highlighted the success of the recent jobs fair which had taken place in Lagan Valley LeisurePlex the previous week. He detailed a number of positive statistics arising from the event. The Chairperson welcomed the positive feedback from employers.

The Chairperson acknowledged the tremendous amount of work by Council Officers to ensure a successful outcome and stated that it was important that this success story was promoted. The Chairperson asked that the Committee's thanks be conveyed to all who had been involved.

#### 5.3 Celebration Event for the Self Employment Support Programme Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery

The Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery, referred to the celebration event that had taken place recently to acknowledge the success of the Self Employment Support Programme which had recruited a total of 40 businesses. Having welcomed the success of this programme, the Chairperson highlighted a number of positive outcomes and achievements of those businesses that had taken part.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor A Gowan, left the meeting at 7.09 pm.

The Chairperson commended the Officers from the Economic Development Unit for their work on this celebration event and encouraged the Committee to go along and support the team of Officers at such events in the future.

5.3 Celebration Event for the Self Employment Support Programme (Cont'd)

The Director of Regeneration & Growth thanked the Chairperson, Councillor Lavery, for his comments and also for his continued support. He assured the Committee that a comprehensive report on this programme would come forward in due course.

The Head of Planning & Capital Development left the meeting at 7.12 pm.

5.4 Flooding Hardship Grants Update  
Head of Economic Development

The Head of Economic Development updated the Committee on flooding hardship grants following severe flooding in September and October 2023. The first element of the flooding hardship grant scheme for grants up to £100,000 had been announced the previous week with a further element for smaller hardship grants to be released shortly. Whilst the applications for the £100,000 grants were via Newry, Mourne & Down District Council's digital portal, assessments of applications from local businesses would be carried out by Officers of this Council. Closing date for applications was 22 March 2024.

The Head of Economic Development also advised the Committee of the two smaller hardship flooding grants, namely; (a) a grant in the region of £5,000 for those businesses that had failed to meet the criteria of the above-mentioned grants, and (b) a grant in the region of £2,500 for those businesses not affected by flooding directly but which had suffered detriment as a result of access issues as a result of flooding.

The Head of Economic Development encouraged Members to refer any affected business that they were aware of, to his team in Economic Development.

The Director of Regeneration & Growth also addressed the Committee on this matter and advised that a report detailing the outcome of the above grant schemes would come forward to the Committee in due course.

5.5 Filming by Channel 5 at Hillsborough Forest  
Director of Regeneration & Growth

The Director of Regeneration & Growth drew the Committee's attention to the proposals from Channel 5 on the filming of a detective drama series to be staged in Hillsborough Forest, the relevant DEA Members having been advised previously.

6. Confidential Report from Director of Regeneration & Growth

The Chairperson advised that the Confidential report items were confidential due to containing information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

In Committee

It was proposed by Councillor P Burke, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, 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 (7.18 pm).

The Chairperson, Councillor J Lavery, extended a welcome to the Head of Assets who was in attendance at her first meeting for the purpose of presenting to the Committee.

6.1 Acquisitions and Disposal and Estates Update  
(Redacted report to be published following sealing of all documents at Council)

The Head of Assets outlined the background and key issues in regard to acquisitions and disposals of land interests and also provided an update on estate matters.

The Committee had been furnished with respective draft leases in connection with the facilities concerned.

It was proposed by Alderman A G Ewart, seconded by Councillor P Burke, and agreed to recommend that:

- (a) Hilden Primary School - the draft Lease and Development Agreement associated with the redevelopment of this facility be agreed and that the completed agreements be brought forward for signing at the meeting of Council on 26 March 2024.
- (b) Manor Park - the draft lease with NIE be agreed and the completed agreement be brought forward for signing at the meeting of Council on 26 March 2024.
- (c) Ashmount Gardens - this area of land be approved as surplus to requirements and the matter be progressed in line with the relevant policy for consideration of a community asset transfer.
- (d) Laurelhill – the update as outlined be noted.

Further to the decision of the Committee at its meeting in February 2024 the Director provided an update in regard to the lease of the sports pitch at Saintfield Road, Carryduff.

Councillor G Hynds left the meeting at 7.30 pm.

6.2 Regeneration and Economic Reserve Fund

(Redacted report to be published following the launch of the programme)

The Director of Regeneration & Growth outlined the background and key issues in connection with proposals for a Regeneration and Economic Reserve Fund.

A detailed paper on the rationale and proposals for such a Fund had been appended to the Director's report.

The Director responded to questions from the Committee on issues arising from the report.

Alderman A G Ewart left the meeting at 7.37 pm.

It was proposed by Councillor U Mackin, seconded by Councillor A Martin, and agreed that the recommendations as outlined in the report on the establishment of Regeneration and Economic Reserve Fund be agreed.

6.3 Refurbishment of the Light Floor in Lisburn City Centre

(Redacted report to be published on completion of the project)

The Head of Economic Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with proposals for the refurbishment of the Light Floor in Lisburn City Centre.

It was proposed by Councillor N Parker, seconded by Councillor U Mackin, and agreed to recommend that the Business Case as circulated be approved and that the project be progressed as a revenue project.

6.4 Funding available from the Department for Communities

(Redacted report to be published in August 2024)

The Head of Economic Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with funding from the Department for Communities.

Two Business Cases had been appended to the report circulated.

It was proposed by Councillor U Mackin, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, and agreed to recommend that:

- (a) the funding offered through the Department for Communities as detailed in the report be accepted,
- (b) the costs as outlined in the appended Business Case for the DfC linked proposals be approved, and

6.4 Funding available from the Department for Communities (Cont'd)

- (c) the essential repairs within the Business Case for the decorative lighting within the city centre be approved.

7. Any Other Confidential Business

7.1 Destination Royal Hillsborough – BRCD Funding  
Director of Regeneration & Growth

The Director having provided a verbal update in regard to the above BRCD project advised that an update report would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor G McCleave, seconded by Councillor P Burke, 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 8.02 pm.

---

Chairperson