

**LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held remotely and in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 6.00 pm.**

**PRESENT IN COUNCIL CHAMBER (COMMITTEE):**

Councillor J Laverty, BEM (Chairman)  
The Right Worshipful The Mayor  
Alderman S Martin  
  
Aldermen J Dillon MBE and A Ewart MBE  
  
Councillor A Ewing

**PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION (COMMITTEE):**

Alderman M Henderson, MBE (Vice-Chairman)  
Alderman A Grehan  
  
Councillors S Lowry and J McCarthy

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive (Remote)  
Director of Finance & Corporate Services  
Director of Service Transformation  
Head of Corporate Communications & Administration  
Head of Environmental Health (Remote)  
Head of Finance  
Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development  
Portfolio Manager (Remote)  
IT Officer  
Events Technician  
Member Services Officers (RN & PS)

**Commencement of Meeting**

The Chairman, Councillor J Laverty, welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that it was being live-streamed to enable members of the public to both hear and see the proceedings.

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 Chairman stated that, although the meeting was being live-streamed, unauthorised recording was still not permitted, as per 8.5 of the Council's Standing Orders. The Chairman also reminded everyone to ensure that mobile phones were turned off or on silent mode for the duration of the meeting.

The Director of Finance & Corporate Services proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency. Finally the Chairman 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.

1. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of Alderman P Porter; Councillors R Carlin, S Carson and U Mackin.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman 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.

The following Declaration was made:

- Councillor J Laverty – Item 2 of Report of Head of Corporate Communications & Administration – “LVI Illumination Request – Foster Care Fortnight”. (Foster Carer and Member of Fostering Network)

3. Report of Head of Corporate Communications & Administration

3.1 South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust

3.1.1 Consultation – “Public Consultation on the Temporary Changes to Urgent and Emergency Care Services at Lagan Valley Hospital, Lisburn”  
(Closing date: 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022)

Members were provided with a draft response to the above consultation. The draft response incorporated comments made as follows:-

- submitted to Member Services in response to an invitation for comments;
- at a meeting of the Health Working Group held on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022 (to which all Members had been invited) and at which senior officials of the SE Trust had been present.

No further comments were offered.

3.1.1 Consultation – “Public Consultation on the Temporary Changes to Urgent and Emergency Care Services at Lagan Valley Hospital, Lisburn”  
(Closing date: 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022) (Continued)

It was proposed by Alderman A Ewart, seconded by Councillor A Ewing and agreed that the draft response to the above consultation be accepted as the Council’s response thereto and – in line with authority delegated by the Council on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 – be submitted to the SE Trust by the stipulated closing date of the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022.

3.1.2 Temporary pause of services at the Midwifery-Led Unit at the Lagan Valley Hospital  
Confidential briefing of Health Working Group - 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022

The Chairman referred to the recent announcement by the SE Trust that services at the Midwifery-Led Unit at Lagan Valley Hospital were being paused temporarily. A meeting of the Health Working Group to which all Members of Council had been invited had been arranged for the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 6.00 pm when a confidential briefing on this matter would be delivered by SE Trust officials.

3.1.3 Meeting of Health Working Group – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022 at 6.00 pm

The Chairman advised that a meeting of the Health Working Group had been arranged for the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022 at 6.00 pm. All members of Council would be invited to attend. The meeting would receive:-

- an update from the SE Trust on the consultation in respect of Urgent and Emergency Care at the Lagan Valley Hospital;
- the normal updates from the Belfast and South Eastern Health & Social Care Trusts.

3.2 Building Illumination Requests  
Requests acceded to under Exceptional Circumstances

The Committee noted that exceptional circumstances had been identified and agreed by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Mayor to allow LVI to be lit as follows:-

- St Patrick’s Day – in green on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022
- Foster Care Fortnight – in turquoise and yellow (rotation) on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022 to mark the start of Foster Care Fortnight.

The Chairman commended the work of foster carers and encouraged people to become involved in this service.

3.3 Lisburn & Castlereagh Policing & Community Partnership

3.3.1 Minutes of Meetings

Members had been provided with the minutes of the following meetings of the Lisburn & Castlereagh Policing & Community Safety Partnership, the contents of which were noted:-

- Private meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021;
- Policing Committee held on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022;
- Special Private Meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

3.3.2 “Grand Choice” event for Downshire West DEA  
St John’s Parish Centre, Moira – 9<sup>th</sup> April 2022

The Chairman reported on a highly successful “Grand Choice” event in Moira on the 9<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at which 23 projects had competed to win votes from attendees for the award of funding. 16 projects were successful in their bids for funding.

The event had provided wider engagement opportunities with the community and a number of statutory agencies.

4. Report of Head of Finance

4.1 Local Government Staff Commission – Contribution for 2022/2023

Further to the previous meeting of the Committee, Members were provided with the following items of correspondence so as to assist them in their decision about payment of the Council’s contribution to the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) in the sum of £31,359:-

- letter dated the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2022 from the Director of Finance & Corporate Services to the LGSC;
- response dated the 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022 from the LGSC;
- LGSC Management Plan for 2021/2023;
- LGSC Financial Scheme 2022/2023;
- LGSC Management Structure.

The above documents had been e-mailed to Members of the Committee on the 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and uploaded to Decision Time on the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

4.1 Local Government Staff Commission – Contribution for 2022/2023  
(Continued)

It was proposed by Alderman J Dillon, seconded by The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Alderman S Martin, and agreed that:-

- in order that Members might have sufficient time to consider the response and documents from the Local Government Staff Commission, a decision on payment of the Council's contribution be deferred to the May 2022 meeting of the Committee;
- the following comments be conveyed to the LGSC for response:-
  - were secondment costs in relation to secondments into the LGSC or of LGSC staff to external positions?;
  - concerns that the Performance Objectives had not actually demonstrated any level of success and thereby would pose the question as to why the Department of Communities was even giving consideration to the LGSC having a future;
  - an explanation for the "running costs" associated with Professional Fees and Audit (External/Internal);
  - justification of the Chairman's Allowance which was considered excessive;
  - an explanation as to why the LGSC had not furloughed any of its staff during the Covid-19 Pandemic given that the role of the LGSC would appear to lend itself to such furlough arrangements;
  - what reserves are presently held by the Commission?;
  - in the event of the LGSC being dissolved during 2022/2023, would there be a reimbursement of the Council's contribution on a pro-rata basis and from any reserves built up by the Commission.

5. Report of Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development

5.1 Employers for Disability – Membership 2022/2023

The Council has membership of "Employers for Disability" and in the Head of Service's report, the services provided by that organisation were set out.

It was proposed by Councillor A Ewing, seconded by Alderman A Ewart and agreed to recommend that the Council renew its membership of Employers for Disability for 2022/2023 at a cost of £695.00.

6. Agenda Item Brought Forward  
Any Other Business

As the remainder of the business before the meeting was of a confidential nature, the Chairman sought agreement to bring forward Item 7 of the agenda – Any Other Business – so that items of a non-confidential nature might be raised when the Committee was in Live Stream. This was agreed.

6.1 JAM (Just A Moment)

The Chairman referred to a JAM event which he had attended earlier in the day at Lagan Valley Island and he invited the Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development to update the Committee on the JAM (Just A Moment) initiative.

The Head of HR and Organisation Development informed Members that a JAM card allows people with a hidden disability or communication barrier to tell others in a private and easy way that they need extra time and understanding. It is Belfast-based and a large number of cards have already been issued. Within the Council, 230 staff have been trained in the JAM initiative with the training having been delivered in-house.

Councillor H Legge was the Elected Member who had asked for the JAM card to be promoted within the Council and it is a highly positive initiative.

6.2 Salvation Army/Society of St Vincent de Paul event

The Chairman thanked his Vice-Chairman, Alderman M Henderson, for attending in his place, an event to celebrate the work of the Salvation Army and the Society of St Vincent de Paul. The Chairman commended the sterling work carried out by both organisations in the community.

7. Confidential Report from Director of Finance & Corporate Services

The reasons for confidentiality were as set out in the agenda, ie:-

7.1 Royal Hillsborough Concert & Fireworks  
(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

Report will not become unrestricted.

7.2 Digital Council Business Case: Telephony & Digital Platform  
(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 redacted in September 2022 (or when new contracts are in place).

7.3 Engagement of Internal Auditor Manager

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

Report will not become unrestricted.

7.4 Council initiatives to remember those who have lost their lives through the Covid-19 Pandemic and also those who have lost their lives due to Suicide

(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 redacted after the Suicide Memorial Space has been launched.

7.5 Security Contract Award – Update

(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 redacted post the award of the contract.

7.6 Mobile Telephony & Data Services Contract

(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 redacted on award of the contract.

7.7 Freedom of the City - Update

(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 redacted following the event.

7.8 Theatre & Conferencing

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

Report will not become unrestricted.

7.9 Consolidation of Scheme of Allowances payable to Councillors

(Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information); or (ii) any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a Government Department and employees of, or office holders under, the Council.)

Report to be redacted following meeting of Council on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

7.10 Management Accounts – Period 11

(Confidential for reason of information relating to (i) the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) or (ii) any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a Government Department and employees of, or office holders under, the Council.)

Report to be redacted following meeting of Council on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

7.11 Hybrid Working

(Confidential for reason of information related to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a Government Department and employees of, or office holders under, the Council.)

Report to be redacted following meeting of Council on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

7.12 Council's Leave Policy – Update

(Confidential for reason of information related to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a Government Department and employees of, or office holders under, the Council.)

Report to be redacted following meeting of Council on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

7.13 Buy-Back of Pension

(Confidential for reason of information (i) relating to any individual; (ii) which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual; (iii) relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

Report will not become unrestricted.

In Committee

It was proposed by Councillor A Ewing, seconded by The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Alderman S Martin, and agreed that the Confidential Report of the Director be considered "in Committee". (The live-stream was paused at this stage in proceedings.)

7.1 Royal Hillsborough Concert & Fireworks

Presented by the Director of Service Transformation. The Portfolio Manager was present for this item of business.



7.1 Royal Hillsborough Concert & Fireworks (Continued)

The Director of Service Transformation provided a comprehensive report from which it was noted that – given the tight timeframes to deliver a quality event, ever-changing Covid guidance and regulations at the turn of the year, and global uncertainties, the Hillsborough Concert and Fireworks event projected for April/May 2022 (which was the latest time possible to satisfy funding conditions) would not take place and instead, alternatives for 2023 were being explored.

The Director expressed his thanks to the Chairman, Elected Members, Working Group and Officers for their work and support in endeavouring to achieve the event but – for the reasons outlined above – this had not been possible for this season.

The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Alderman S Martin, commended all staff who had been involved in the Royal Hillsborough celebratory event on the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2022, which had been an outstanding success.

7.2 Digital Council Business Case: Telephony & Digital Platform

Presented by the Director of Service Transformation. The Head of Environmental Health was present for this item of business.

The Director of Service Transformation provided a comprehensive report on the above matter, together with the following documents:-

- PIRSOC (Project Initiation Request & Strategic Outline Case) re Digital Council
- Business Case re Digital Council
- Telephony Update Report

It was proposed by The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Alderman S Martin, seconded by Alderman J Dillon and agreed to recommend that Option 1 of the Business Case be progressed so as to realise planned efficiencies and to modernise telephony and end-of-life software systems.

7.3 Engagement of Internal Auditor Manager

Presented by the Director of Finance & Corporate Services.

In response to a request made at the meeting of Council on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022, the Director provided a comprehensive report in regard to the engagement of the Internal Auditor Manager, the content of which was noted.

The Director of Service Transformation left the meeting during the presentation of the report referred to above. (6.45 pm)

7.4 Council initiatives to remember those who have lost their lives through the Covid-19 Pandemic and also those who have lost their lives due to Suicide

Presented by the Head of Corporate Communications & Administration.

The Head of Service provided a comprehensive report in regard to the above initiatives. An equality screening document in regard to the initiative to remember those who have lost their lives due to Suicide was also provided.

It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Alderman J Dillon and agreed that –subject to the guest list for the PR event being extended to include all Members of Council - the proposals in relation to the initiative to support families and to remember those who have lost their lives to suicide be agreed, ie the provision of a reflective space at Lagan Valley Island, together with bespoke bench, imagery and plaque.

The update in regard to the Covid-19 memorial initiative was noted. It was agreed that the guest list for the PR event for this initiative also be extended to include all Members of Council.

7.5 Security Contract Award – Update

Presented by the Head of Corporate Communications & Administration.

The Head of Service provided an update report in regard to the Security Contract from which it was noted that the contract for Caretaker and Reception Services at Bradford Court had been awarded to the firm as set out in the report, with the contract commencing the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022.

The Committee had been advised earlier in the meeting that the report on expenditure associated with Bradford Court would be presented to the May meeting of the Committee. It was agreed that such a report would also address:-

- any financial responsibility that the tenants of Bradford Court might have for the security costs at that location;
- loan costs etc associated with Bradford Court.

The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Alderman S Martin, left and returned to the Chamber during discussion of this matter. (6.58 pm and 7.05 pm)

## 7.6 Mobile Telephony & Data Services Contract

Presented by the Head of Corporate Communications & Administration.

The Head of Service provided a report in regard to the above contract from which it was noted that a provider as set out in her report had been selected for the Council's mobile voice and data services for a period of 24 months, with the option to extend for a further 12 months. The firm selected was the lowest cost option.

The Head of Service responded to Members' questions and:-

- agreed to provide Members with (i) details on those parts of the specification which firms - other than the successful one - had failed to meet and (ii) any further explanation of the term "Equipment Credit";
- speak with Alderman J Dillon regarding the high level of his recent monthly bills for mobile telephony and data.

## 7.7 Freedom of the City - Update

Presented by the Head of Corporate Communications & Administration.

The Head of Service provided a comprehensive report in relation to the forthcoming Freedom of the City events.

### 7.7.1 Health & Social Care

The Committee noted the progress report about the Freedom of the City event for Health & Social Care.

The Head of Service noted Members' comments about the composition of the H&SC guest list and gave an assurance that the Committee's views about this had been conveyed and re-enforced to the SE Trust who were leading on this matter on behalf of all H&SC. Other aspects of the guest list were clarified.

### 7.7.2 Keith & Krysten Getty

The Head of Service provided a report in regard to the Freedom of the City event for Keith & Krysten Getty and also verbally reported a potential change in date to that set out in her report.

It was proposed by Alderman A Ewart, seconded by Councillor A Ewing and agreed that – subject to a potential change in date for the event – the report in regard to the Freedom of the City event for the Gettys be agreed so as allow arrangements to progress.

7.8 Theatre & Conferencing

Presented by the Head of Corporate Communications & Administration.

In response to a request made at the previous meeting about bookings and budgeted income for the Island Hall and conferences/events, the Head of Service reported extensively on this matter, the content of which was noted.

It was agreed that this matter be reported on a regular basis by way of the Items for Noting Schedule.

The Head of Service confirmed that the alcohol licence for Lagan Valley Island was now in place and that the matter of pre-event catering was part of a wider piece of work on the marketing of Lagan Valley Island.

The Right Worshipful The Mayor, Alderman S Martin, left the Chamber during discussion of this item of business. (7.31 pm)

7.9 Consolidation of Scheme of Allowances payable to Councillors

Presented by the Head of Finance.

The Head of Finance reported on a recent circular from the Local Government & Housing Regulation Division of the Department for Communities which consolidated all councillor allowances and which had been required to determine and reflect an increase in maximum rates for Basic and Special Responsibility Allowance from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and an increase in Dependants' Carers' Allowance from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022.

There was unanimous agreement within the meeting to accept the recommendations of the report.

7.10 Management Accounts – Period 11

Presented by the Head of Finance who responded to Members' questions.

It was agreed to recommend that the Management Accounts for the period ending the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022, together with an extensive narrative report by way of explanation be noted.

7.11 Hybrid Working

Presented by the Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development.

The Head of Service reported extensively on Hybrid working, referring to consultations which had taken place by way of survey and focus groups; the main matters for consideration that had arisen from such consultations; and the Corporate Services Committee workshop on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2022 to which all Members had been invited.

7.11 Hybrid Working (Continued)

A proposal for a Hybrid Working Protocol and a pilot of that Protocol was being proposed.

It was proposed by Councillor A Ewing, seconded by Alderman A Grehan and agreed to recommend that the proposal for a Pilot Hybrid Working Protocol be piloted for a period of six months commencing the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022, during which time the effectiveness of the way of working would be evaluated for implementation if and as appropriate. It was further agreed that an interim report be brought to the Committee after three months of the Pilot.

The Director confirmed that opportunities occasioned by any surplus space in Lagan Valley Island were being explored as part of the wider piece of work on the marketing of Lagan Valley Island.

Members were reminded that any complaints they received should be appropriately documented so that they might be suitably investigated.

7.12 Council's Leave Policy – Update

Presented by the Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development.

The Head of Service reported on the introduction of the Parental Bereavement (Leave & Pay) Act (NI) 2022 on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and the necessary amendments to the Council's leave policy to take account of that Act.

It was proposed by Alderman A Ewart, seconded by Alderman M Henderson and agreed to recommend that:-

- the introduction of the Parental Bereavement (Leave & Pay) Act (NI) 2022 on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022 be noted;
- the changes to the Council's leave policy occasioned by the above Act be agreed.

7.13 Buy-Back of Pension

Presented by the Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development.

The Head of Service reported on a request for buy-back of pension.

It was proposed by Councillor A Ewing, seconded by Alderman J Dillon and agreed to recommend that – given that the conditions for the buy-back of lost pension had been met - the buy-back of pension for a Council employee through a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contribution (SCAPC) be approved.

8. Any Other Business - Confidential

There was no other confidential business raised.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Alderman A Ewart, seconded by Alderman J Dillon and agreed to come “out of Committee”. Normal business and the live-stream were resumed.

9. Any Other Business

There was no other business raised.

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 8.05 pm.

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MAYOR/CHAIRMAN