

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Environmental Services Committee held in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, and remotely, on Wednesday 5th April 2023 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT IN CHAMBER:

Councillor M Gregg (Chairman)

Councillor C McCready (Vice-Chairman)

Alderman J Baird,

Councillors A P Ewing, A Givan and A McIntyre

PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor S Carson

Aldermen D Drysdale and S P Porter

Councillors F Cole and S Skillen

OTHER MEMBERS:

In Chamber:

Alderman S Martin

Councillors H Legge and Jenny Palmer

IN ATTENDANCE:

In Chamber:

Acting Director of Environmental Services (RH)
 Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services)
 Head of Service (Building Control)
 Acting Head of Service (Environmental Health) (SC)
 Member Services Officers (CH, RN)

Commencement of the Meeting

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman, Councillor M Gregg, welcomed those present to the meeting of the Environmental Services 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 M Gregg, 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 Chairman proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. Apologies (00:02:06)

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of Deputy Mayor Councillor M Guy, Alderman M Henderson, Councillor S Lee, Councillor S Lowry and the Director of Environmental Services, Mrs H Moore.

2. Declarations of Interest (00:02:58)

The following interest was declared:

- Councillor J Palmer in respect of item 4.1 'Use of Smithfield Square Off Street Car Park by Lisburn City Old Vehicle Club' given that she was a member of the Lisburn City Old Vehicle Club.

3. Report by the Acting Director of Environmental Services (00:03:19)

3.1 Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor Hazel Legge – Postbox to Heaven (00:03:28)

Members were provided with a copy of the following Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor H Legge, which had been referred to the Committee by Council on 28 March, 2023 for consideration:

“Following a recent initiative in Antrim & Newtownabbey Council, I am proposing that we grant Agreement in Principle for LCCC to consider the installation of a “Postbox to Heaven” in all Council owned cemeteries within our Council area to provide a potential outlet for those grieving the loss of a loved one”.

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor H Legge and seconded by Councillor Jenny Palmer.

With the permission of the Chairman, Councillor H Legge advised the Committee that she proposed that officers investigate the installation of one ‘Postbox to Heaven’ at each Lisburn and Castlereagh Council owned cemetery following a similar successful initiative in Nottingham, which provided an outlet for those grieving the loss of a loved one.

Councillor H Legge stated that the ‘Postbox to Heaven’ would not only benefit children, but would benefit anyone who had a recent loss and was struggling with their grief. She further explained that other local Councils were also considering similar initiatives. She thanked the Committee for the opportunity to bring forward the Notice of Motion and asked for their support.

3.1 Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor Hazel Legge – Postbox to Heaven Cont'd

In seconding the Notice of Motion, Councillor Jenny Palmer concurred with the aforementioned sentiments expressed by Councillor H Legge and stated that she fully supported the motion before the Committee. She said that if the Council could provide a way which allowed those grieving to have an outlet to express those feelings of sadness in the form of a letter, it would be of great benefit to them.

A number of comments and questions were raised by members of the Committee in relation to the operational practicalities of the postboxes, as well as GDPR and Section 75 concerns. The Chairman, Councillor M Gregg advised the Committee that the above matters would be explored by officers and included in the future report that would be brought to the Committee for consideration.

Following a vote the Committee agreed unanimously to recommend that:

- that officers consider the installation of a 'Postbox to Heaven' in all Council owned cemeteries within the Council area be approved;
- an information gathering exercise be completed by Officers to include contacting other Local Authorities who had already installed similar initiatives in their area; and
- a report to include information gathering findings to be tabled to a future Environmental Services Committee meeting for Members consideration.

3.2 Kerbside Collection Services (00:21:31)

Councillor H Legge left the meeting at (6.23 pm).

Alderman S Martin left the meeting at (6.25 pm).

Councillor AP Ewing left the Chamber at (6.36 pm) and returned at (6.38 pm).

Alderman D Drysdale joined the meeting remotely at (6.40 pm).

The Committee considered an update report regarding the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) consultation process on the proposed kerbside model.

Members were advised that as the pre-election period of heightened sensitivity would commence on 6 April, NILGA had developed guidance to support Members and Officers during this time. A copy of the NILGA guidance was circulated to Members for information. Particular attention was drawn to the section of the guidance on consultations, which stated that, unless it is a statutory duty, don't start any new consultations or publish report findings from consultation exercises which should be politically utilised or ideologically sensitive.

It was further advised that a number of Charities and lobbying groups had made representation to the Council and officers would engage with these groups before commencing any formal Equality Impact Assessment Consultation (EQIA). An extract from the current waste collection policy was provided to Members.

3.2 Kerbside Collection Services Cont'd

It was reported that consultation on the existing policy would be progressed alongside the EQIA consultation to ensure any proposed policy reflected the most up to date views of such groups on the grounds of equality.

The Acting Director responded to a number of questions from the Committee arising from the report. Alderman S P Porter put on record his concern in relation to the consultation not going far enough, in that it should have been a full public consultation on the proposed kerbside model, not just an equality consultation.

It was proposed by Councillor A McIntyre, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that:

- the content of the report be noted; and
- the commencement of the public equality consultation as soon as is practicably possible be approved.

4. Report by the Acting Head of Service (Environmental Health) (00:40:09)

4.1 Use of Smithfield Square Off Street Car Park by Lisburn City Old Vehicle Club (LCOVC) (00:40:10)

The Committee considered a report which outlined details in relation to an application from Lisburn City Old Vehicle Club (LCOVC), for the use of Smithfield Square Off Street Car Park on Sunday 6 August 2023 as part of a vintage vehicle event in Lisburn City Centre from 8am until 6pm.

The Committee noted that there would be no loss of income as the car park was free to use on Sundays and alternative free parking was available nearby. Members had been provided with a copy of the Lisburn City Old Vehicle Clubs overview for consideration.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor A McIntyre, and agreed to recommend that the request from Lisburn City Old Vehicle Club (LCOVC) to use Smithfield Square on Sunday 6 August 2023 from 8am to 6pm be approved.

4.2 Draft Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-2030 (00:42:05)

The Committee considered a report which provided key information in connection with a public consultation received from the Department of Health and the Department of Justice, in relation to the Draft Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-2030. It was reported that the draft strategy re-emphasised that Domestic and Sexual abuse had no place in our society and reinforced commitment to zero tolerance.

Members were provided with a copy of the correspondence received, which included the link to the Consultation for Members' information. A copy of the draft response which was proposed to be submitted on behalf of the Council was also circulated to Members for their consideration. Members were requested to forward any comments for inclusion in the final response to the Acting Head of Service (Environmental Health) by 21 April 2023.

4.2 Draft Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-2030 Cont'd

It was proposed by Councillor A McIntyre, seconded by Alderman J Baird, and agreed to recommend that the response to the Draft Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-2030, to be submitted on behalf of the Council prior to the closing date of 2 May 2023 be approved.

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

5.1 Public Consultation on the draft Circular Economy Strategy for Northern Ireland – arc21 Response (00:43:43)

Councillor A McIntyre left the Chamber at (6.45 pm).
Councillor F Cole left the meeting remotely at (6.45 pm).
Councillor S Skillen left the meeting at (6.46 pm).

The Committee was reminded that Members were contacted by e-mail on 3 February 2023 and advised that the Department for the Economy had launched a public consultation on the draft Circular Economy Strategy for Northern Ireland. It was explained that the draft strategy set out their vision to create an innovative, inclusive and competitive economy, with responsible production and consumption at its core.

It was further explained that as the closing date for responses was 20 March 2023, arc21 produced a response on behalf of member Councils. Members had been requested to forward any comments for inclusion in the final response by Friday, 3rd March 2023. A copy of the final response was circulated to Members for consideration.

It was proposed by Alderman D Drysdale, seconded by Vice-Chairman, Councillor C McCready, and agreed to recommend that the retrospective endorsement of the arc21 response to the public consultation on the draft Circular Economy Strategy for Northern Ireland be approved.

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

6. Any other Business (Agenda item 7.0 refers) (00:45:38)

6.1 Cemetery Charges Increase – Press Coverage Alderman S P Porter (00:45:45)

Cllr A McIntyre returned to the Chamber at (6.49pm).

Alderman S P Porter raised concern on the recent inaccurate press coverage in relation to the increase in Council cemetery charges. Following discussion, it was confirmed that the Council had been approached by the BBC in relation to the reported increases and were responding accordingly.

6.2 Sprucefield Park and Ride Litter
Vice-Chairman Councillor C McCready (00:53:14)

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor C McCready requested that appreciation be passed to the Project Manager for Waste & Operational Services on behalf of the Committee for his work in relation to the above matter.

Councillor C McCready also requested that an update be sought from Dfl in relation to the upkeep of the area going forward. It was agreed that the Head of Service for Waste Management and Operational Services would investigate and report back to Councillor McCready directly on the matter.

6.3 Condition of Greenway at Sprucefield/Blaris
Councillor Jenny Palmer (00:54:30)

The Committee agreed to a request by Councillor Jenny Palmer, that a letter be written to Dfl in relation to ongoing cleansing problems with the new greenway, specifically in relation to the smell of ammonia and problems in relation to pigeons under the bridge.

6.4 Chairman, Councillor M Gregg & Vice-Chairman, Councillor C McCready
Tributes (00:56:35)

Councillor A McIntyre thanked Councillor M Gregg for the professional manner in which he had chaired the Environmental Services Committee meetings during the past year. These sentiments were echoed by Councillor A Givan.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor C McCready also put on record his thanks to the Chairman, highlighting the good working relationship established throughout the year.

The Chairman, Councillor M Gregg, thanked the Vice-Chairman, Councillor C McCready, and the Members of the Environmental Services Committee for their support over the year.

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

The Chairman, Councillor M Gregg, advised that the confidential report item 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 Councillor A P Ewing, 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 (7.00 pm).

7.1 Collection and Recycling of Rubble from Council Household Recycling Centres (Agenda item 6.1 refers) (Report will not be made available)

The Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) presented this item of business.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor A Givan, and agreed to recommend that:

- the Financial Appraisal and Preliminary Expenditure Application (PEA) as detailed in the report be approved; and
- the commencement of a new procurement exercise for the collection and recycling of rubble from Council Household Recycling Centres be approved.

7.2 Collection, Recycling and/or Recovery of Wood from Council Household Recycling Centres (Agenda item 6.2 refers) (Report will not be made available)

The Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) presented this item of business.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor A Givan, and agreed to recommend that:

- the Financial Appraisal and Preliminary Expenditure Application (PEA) as detailed in the report be approved; and
- the commencement of a new procurement exercise for the collection, recycling and/or recovery of wood from Council Household Recycling Centres be approved.

7.3 Collection and Recycling of Scrap Metals from Council Household Recycling (Agenda item 6.3 refers) (Report will not be made available)

The Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) presented this item of business.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor A Givan, and agreed to recommend that:

- the Financial Appraisal and Preliminary Expenditure Application (PEA) as detailed in the report be approved; and
- the commencement of a new procurement exercise for the collection and recycling of scrap metals from Council Household Recycling Centres be approved.

7.4 Collection and Recycling of Plasterboard from Council Household Recycling Centres (Agenda item 6.4 refers)
(Report will not be made available)

The Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) presented this item of business.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor A Givan, and agreed to recommend that:

- the Financial Appraisal and Preliminary Expenditure Application (PEA) as detailed in the report be approved; and
- the commencement of a new procurement exercise for the collection and recycling of plasterboard from Council Household Recycling Centres be approved.

7.5 Collection, Recycling and/or Recovery of Paint & Aerosols from Council Household Recycling Centres (Agenda item 6.5 refers)
(Report will not be made available)

The Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) presented this item of business.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor A Givan, and agreed to recommend that:

- the Financial Appraisal and Preliminary Expenditure Application (PEA) as detailed in the report be approved; and
- the commencement of a new procurement exercise for the collection, recycling and/or recovery of paint and aerosols from Council Household Recycling Centres be approved.

7.6 Collection, Recycling and/or Recovery of Mattresses from Council Household Recycling Centres (Agenda item 6.6 refers)
(Redacted report to be published 26th April 2023)

The Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) presented this item of business.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor A Givan, and agreed to recommend that that the award of the tender for the collection, recycling and/or recovery of mattresses from Council Household Recycling Centres as outlined in the report be noted.

- 7.7 Haulage of Residual and Green Waste from Council Household Recycling Centres (Agenda item 6.7 refers)
(Redacted report to be published 26th April 2023)

Councillor Jenny Palmer left the Chamber at (7.03 pm).

The Head of Service (Waste Management and Operational Services) presented this item of business.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, Seconded by Councillor A McIntyre agreed to recommend that the award of the tender for the Haulage of Residual and Green waste from Council Household Recycling Centres as outlined in the report be noted.

Resumption of Normal Business

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

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chairman, Councillor M Gregg extended his thanks to all Officers and requested that the Committees appreciation be passed to the operational crews for their work over the past year.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.04 pm.

Mayor/Chairman