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 9th September 2026 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT IN COUNCIL CHAMBER (COMMITTEE):	Alderman P Porter (Chair) Councillor R McLernon (Vice-Chair) The Right Worshipful The Mayor Councillor B Higginson Alderman O Gawith Councillors J Bamford, K Dickson, A Ewing, J Harpur, J Laverty BEM, U Mackin, G McCleave, M McKeever and The Hon N Trimble
PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION (COMMITTEE)	Councillors R Carlin and J Harpur
PRESENT IN COUNCIL CHAMBER (NON-COMMITTEE)	Councillor G Hynds
IN ATTENDANCE:	Chief Executive Director of Finance & Corporate Services Director of Organisation Development & Innovation Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing Director of Regeneration & Growth Head of Finance Head of Governance & Communications Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development Head of Innovation Capital Programme Manager IT Officer Member Services Officers (HB & BS)

Commencement of Meeting

The Chair, Alderman P Porter, welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that it would be recorded unless the item on the agenda was to be considered under confidential business.

Unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per 8.6 of the Council's Standing Orders. Mobile phones were to be set to silent mode for the duration of the meeting. Members attending remotely were asked to keep their cameras on. Finally, the 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.

The Director of Finance & Corporate Services outlined the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

He also gave a presentation about the Terms of Reference for Corporate Services Committee.

During the presentation about the Terms of Reference:

- Councillor R Carlin joined the meeting on a remote basis during the safety announcement (6.01 pm)
- Councillor R McLernon entered the Chamber during the Terms of Reference presentation (6.05 pm)

1. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were accepted and recorded on behalf of Alderman A Ewart and Councillor T Beckett.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor G Hynds declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 5.3 – Report on Community Facilities Fund.

3. Report of Director of Organisation Development and Innovation

3.1 Elections 2027 – Operational Requirements

The Director of Organisation Development and Innovation explained that both the local government elections and the Northern Ireland Assembly elections will take place next year on 6th May 2027, therefore, there will be no committee meetings in May 2027.

A report had been provided to Members and it was proposed by Councillor U Mackin, seconded by Councillor R McLernon and agreed to recommend that:-

- The date for the Annual Meeting of Council be agreed as Thursday 27 May 2027 at 12 noon;
- Delegated authority be approved for the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Mayor, to take urgent operational or strategic decisions from 27 April 2027 until 27 May 2027, in the absence of committee.

4. Report of Head of Governance and Communications

4.1 Citywide

A narrative report and Equality Screening with costs for the production and distribution of Citywide magazine to the 60,000 (approximately) households in the Council area had been provided.

The Head of Governance and Communications presented three options with the preferred option being to print and deliver the Citywide magazine to all households in 2026. This would improve engagement with communities and ensure that people are informed about future projects and events.

There was some discussion with several Members including Alderman O Gawith, Alderman P Porter, Councillor A Ewing and Councillor U Mackin being supportive of the recommendation to print and deliver Citywide. The Chief Executive confirmed that the success of this would be evaluated.

It was proposed by Councillor U Mackin, seconded by Alderman O Gawith and agreed to recommend that:-

The 2026 Citywide magazine is produced and distributed to our 60,000 (approximately) households.

4.2 Annual Somme Pilgrimage

The Head of Governance and Communications had provided a narrative report and report highlighting the 2026 Somme Pilgrimage.

Members were asked to note the report from the 2026 Somme Pilgrimage and to approve the attendance of Members for the 2027 Somme Pilgrimage, i.e. Mayor, Chair of Corporate Services, Chief Executive (or his nominee) and two other Members who have not previously attended. In addition, the Committee decision had recorded that the two additional attendees should preferably be from parties not already represented by the Mayor and Committee Chair.

It was proposed by Councillor J Bamford and seconded by Councillor R McLernon, to:

- Note the report from the 2026 Somme Pilgrimage; and
- Agree attendance at the 2027 Somme Pilgrimage as outlined in the report.

Both Councillor J Bamford and Councillor R McLernon expressed their thanks for the opportunity to take part in the Somme Pilgrimage and to staff for the arrangements which had been put in place.

4.3 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Support for the Armed Forces Community

A narrative report had been provided about the support provided by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council for the Armed Forces Community, since signing up to the Armed Forces Covenant in 2017.

The Head of Governance and Communications outlined the strong and sustained support for the Armed Forces Community over the years which includes civic recognition, partnership working, advocacy and access to council facilities.

Several Members spoke in support of the paper including Alderman P Porter, Councillor G Hynds and Councillor A Ewing.

Councillor G McCleave re-iterated his party's position that the Armed Forces Covenant places British armed forces ahead of other people which they feel is wrong and do not support.

The Chair, Alderman P Porter, thanked the Mayor and Alderman Tinsley as Veterans Champion, for their support for the Armed Forces.

The Mayor, Councillor B Higginson, left the meeting during this item at 6.32 pm.

The report was duly noted.

4.4 Armed Forces Day 2027 - Working Group

In addition to a narrative report, appendices were provided of a previous committee report on Membership of Ad Hoc Working Groups and the d'Hondt table.

Councillor G Hynds expressed disappointment that the d'Hondt method would exclude him as the only Independent Member.

Councillor G McCleave explained that his party oppose the event and confirmed that they will not be nominating a representative to the Working Group.

It was proposed by Councillor U Mackin that the Independent Member be appointed to the Armed Forces Day 2027 Working Group which was supported by Alderman Porter, Councillor Ewing and Councillor Dickson. This was seconded by Councillor Ewing and supported by all Members with no opposition.

The Chief Executive and Councillor R McLernon left during this Item at 6.36 pm and 6.38 pm, respectively.

The report was duly noted and Councillor G Hynds thanked the other Members for their comments.

5 Report of Head of Finance

5.1 Policy Consultation – Business Growth Accelerator and Non-Domestic Vacant Rates

In addition to a narrative report, the following had been provided:

- Consultation letter from Land & Property Services (LPS)
- Draft LCCC Consultation Response

The Head of Finance explained that the LPS consultation closes on 23 September and a response had been prepared on behalf of Council.

It was proposed by Alderman O Gawith, seconded by Councillor A Ewing, and agreed to recommend that the response prepared by officers in regard to the Policy Consultation be submitted to the Department of Finance, Land & Property Services before the deadline of 23 September.

5.2 Estimates 2027/2028 – Schedule of Meetings

A draft programme of meetings for the 2026/2027 Estimates' process had been provided and was duly recommended for agreement on a Proposal made by Councillor J Laverty and seconded by Councillor A Ewing.

Councillor A Ewing left the Chamber at the end of this item at 6.45 pm and returned at 6.47 pm during Item 5.3.

5.3 Request to Earmark Reserves

Councillor G Hynds left the meeting for this Item and returned for the start of Item 5.4.

The Head of Finance explained that a report had been presented to Communities & Wellbeing Committee regarding the Communities Facilities Fund which had been substantially oversubscribed this year. It was agreed at that Committee to approve awards for all successful groups, subject to the approval of using reserves to cover any deficit.

A narrative report and appendix of the Communities Facilities Fund Outcome Assessment 2026/2027 had been provided to Members.

Councillor J Bamford proposed the recommendation to approve the earmarking of reserves up to a maximum of £234,578 which was seconded by Councillor K Dickson.

Councillor N Trimble asked for clarity regarding any underspend and whether that would be released into the general fund. The Head of Finance confirmed that would happen and will keep Members up to date with normal Reserves reports.

5.4 Treasury 2025/2026 Outturn Report

Presented by the Head of Finance.

Members noted the content of the following:-

- the information contained in the narrative report;
- the 2025/2026 Treasury Management Outturn Report;
- Prudential Indicators 2025/2026 Outturn Report

5.5 Treasury 2026/2027 Outturn, Quarter 1

In addition to the narrative report, the following appendices were provided:

- Q1 2026/2027 Treasury Report
- Q1 2026/2027 Prudential Indicators Report

There were no questions from Members and the report was duly noted.

6 Report of Head of HR & OD

6.1 Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) - Consultation

The Head of HR & OD provided a narrative report regarding the LGSC Consultation on the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees and the Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol as well as several appendices:

- Letter from Local Government Staff Commission
- Schedule of Amendments
- Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees – Consultation version
- Local Government Employees & Councillor Working Relationship Protocol – Consultation version
- Consultation Questionnaire

Councillor K Dickson left the meeting at 6.50 pm and returned at 6.53 pm.

There was lengthy discussion about the LGSC Consultation, especially since the LGSC will no longer be in existence after March 2027. Councillor U Mackin suggested deferring a response until next month's committee which would meet the consultation deadline of 22 October.

6.1 Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) – Consultation (cont'd)

Councillor J Harpur proposed the recommendation that the consultation response at Appendix 5 be approved. However, other Members, including Councillor J Laverty, Councillor G Hynds and Alderman P Porter, were not in support of this. Councillor A Ewing proposed asking for an extension to the consultation deadline.

Councillor J Harpur left the meeting remotely at 7.01 pm. Councillor K Dickson seconded the proposal for the consultation response to be deferred.

6.2 Workforce Reports

Councillor N Trimble left the meeting at the beginning of this item at 7.03 pm and the Director of Communities & Wellbeing left at 7.04 pm.

Reports on the undernoted topics in relation to Council staff across all departments had been provided with the report and their contents duly noted.

- Attendance Management Report for period ended 30th June 2026;
- Recruitment reports – (i) Advert & Selection; and (ii) Appointments;
- Workforce Profile.

The Head of Service responded to Members' questions.

Councillor J Bamford left the meeting during this item at 7.06 pm and returned at 7.09 pm during Any Other Business – Non-Confidential.

Any Other Business – Non-Confidential

Councillor G Hynds raised a point about attendance at Civic Flag Raising Ceremonies and asked if anything could be done to improve attendance.

The Director of Finance & Corporate Services agreed to look at how these could be promoted better in the future.

In Committee

It was proposed by Councillor A Ewing, seconded by Councillor M McKeever and agreed that the Confidential Reports be considered "in Committee". Recording was paused at this stage in proceedings, and any members of the press left the meeting at 7.25 pm.

7. Confidential Reports

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

7.1 Digital Platform: Renewal

(Redacted report will become available post award of contract).

Presented by the Head of Innovation.

It was proposed by Councillor K Dickson, seconded by Councillor J Laverty, that the renewal of the digital platform be agreed.

Councillor Mackin left the meeting at the end of this item at 7.27 pm and returned at 7.31 pm during Item 7.3.

7.2 Report on Tender Awards

(Redacted report will become available following ratification and signing of contracts).

Tender reports and a summary of the tenders awarded had been provided with the narrative report.

The tenders awarded in regard to the following contracts, together with the attendant tender reports, were noted:-

- T25/26-054 – LGTG ILM People Development Programme;
- T25/26-065 – PPM & RM 06 Air Conditioning & Ventilation Systems;
- T25/26-064 – PPM & RM 10: Legionella Management;
- T26/27-011 – LVI Control Room Upgrade;
- T26/27-033 – Social Enterprise Network;
- T26/27-006 – Men’s Health Project;
- T26/27-004 – Let’s Talk – Dialogue Development;
- T26/27-007 – Generation Game Project;
- T25/26-088 – Provision of Play Park Repairs;
- T25/26-077 – Supply & Delivery of Electrical Goods and Fittings;
- T25/26-078 – Supply & Delivery of Plumbing Goods;
- F25/26-002 – Lisburn & Castlereagh Transport Academy;
- F26/27-006 – Recruitment of Agency Staff.

7.3 Quarterly Update on the financial position of the Capital Programme 2025-2030

(Redacted report will become available post financial year end with Capital programme released as part of the budget setting process each year).

Presented by the Director of Regeneration and Growth.

It was proposed by Councillor G. McCleave, seconded by Alderman O. Gawith, and agreed to recommend that the updated financial position of the capital programme, the net cost of which remained within the approved budget, be agreed.

7.4 Movements and Changes in the Capital Programme to July 2026

(Redacted report will become available post financial year end with Capital programme released as part of the budget setting process each year).

Presented by the Director of Regeneration and Growth.

It was proposed by Councillor K Dickson, seconded by Alderman O Gawith, and agreed to recommend that the movements, changes and revised budgets of the projects, as outlined, be agreed.

7.5 Management Accounts

(Redacted report will become available after Full Council).

The Director of Regeneration & Growth and the Capital Programmes Manager left the meeting at the start of Item 7.5 at 6.34 pm.

The Management Accounts for the period ending 31st July, together with the narrative report by way of explanation, were provided and duly noted.

The Head of Finance explained some points from the report and it was proposed by Councillor K Dickson, seconded by Councillor M McKeever, that the updates be made on a quarterly basis, in line with the Terms of Reference.

7.6 Repairs and Renewals – Quarter 1, 2026/2027

(Redacted report will become available after Full Council).

The Head of Finance had provided a narrative report and appendix.

It was proposed by Councillor J Bamford, seconded by Councillor K Dickson, that the R&R figures be presented as part of the management accounts reports moving forward.

7.7 Elections 2027 – Request for Additional Employment
(Report will never become available. Confidential due to the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, Schedule 6, Part 1: Exempt Information, 1 and 2: 1. Information relating to any individual. 2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual).

The Director of Organisation Development and Innovation and the Head of Finance left the meeting for Item 7.7 at 7.38 pm and returned at 7.41 pm.

It was proposed by Councillor M McKeever, seconded by Alderman O Gawith, that approval for relevant staff to undertake additional employment to assist at the 2027 Elections, including approval for the Chief Executive to undertake the role of Deputy Returning Officer at the Assembly Election Count, be agreed.

7.8 Procedures relating to the role of Chief Executive

(The report will become available post ratification. Confidential due to the NI Local Government Act 2014 Schedule 6 Access to Information: Exempt Information Part 1 3. Information relating to any individual, & information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

It was proposed by Councillor K Dickson, seconded by Councillor G McCleave, and agreed that Members approve:

1) the Grievance procedure as attached at Appendix 1.
2) the Disciplinary procedure as attached at Appendix 2.

Following discussion, the Director of Organisation Development & Innovation will make the amendments as requested and circulate an updated version to Members.

8 Any Other Business

No other business of a confidential nature was raised.

It was proposed by Councillor K Dickson, seconded by Councillor M McKeever and agreed to come out of Committee and normal business was resumed.

The Chair, Alderman P Porter, thanked everyone for their attendance, and the meeting concluded at 8.05 pm.

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MAYOR/CHAIR