

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL**Minutes of Meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Committee held in the Council Chamber, Island Civic Centre, on Wednesday 1 October, 2025 at 6.00 pm****PRESENT IN CHAMBER:**

Alderman O Gawith (Chair)

Councillor S Burns (Vice-Chair)

The Right Worshipful the Mayor
Alderman A Grehan

Alderman J Baird

Councillors J Bamford, P Catney, A Givan, G Hynds,
B Magee, C McCready, R McLernon and N Parker**PRESENT IN REMOTE LOCATION:**

Alderman S Skillen

Councillors D Bassett, A Gowan and M McKeever

OTHER MEMBERS IN REMOTE LOCATION:

Alderman J Tinsley

IN ATTENDANCE:Director of Environmental Services
Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk & Emergency Planning)
Head of Service (Waste Management & Operational Services)
Head of Service (Building Control & Sustainability)
Member Services Officers (CR and EW)**Commencement of the Meeting**

The Chair, Alderman O Gawith, welcomed those present to the meeting and advised that it would be audio recorded unless the item on the agenda was to be considered under confidential business. The Chair stated that unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per the Council's Standing Orders. The Chair asked that mobile phones be put on silent or switched off for the duration of the meeting.

In accordance with the Protocol for Remote Meetings, the Chair asked that those attending via zoom to ensure that the meeting could not be seen or heard by any other person at their remote location when confidential business was being considered. The Chair proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

1. **Apologies**

There were no apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Report by Director of Environmental Services

3.1 Notice of Motion – Climate Friendly Burials

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman A Grehan, arrived to the meeting during consideration of this item of business.

At the Council meeting held on 23 September, 2025, the following Notice of Motion had been proposed by Councillor B Magee, seconded by Councillor J Bamford and referred to the Environment and Sustainability Committee for consideration:

“That this Council recognises the significant environmental impact of traditional burial and cremation practices, including high carbon emissions, chemical pollution, and long-term land use challenges, as highlighted in the All-Party Group on Climate Action’s briefing paper “Beyond Burial and Cremation”.

This Council further acknowledges the growing public interest in more sustainable, dignified, and low-carbon alternatives to conventional practices – such as natural (green) burials, tree pod interment, and other emerging end-of-life methods.

Natural burial, which involves the use of biodegradable materials, avoids embalming, and often takes place in woodland or meadow settings with minimal ongoing maintenance, has already been successfully implemented in other parts of the UK as a simple and ecologically restorative option.

Accordingly, this Council agrees to:

1. explore the feasibility of providing sustainable burial options within existing or new cemeteries, including the designation of natural burial grounds or woodland burial areas within our district; and
2. provide an updated report to the All-Party Group on Climate Action on any identified legislative, planning, infrastructural, or regulatory barriers that may impact the delivery of these sustainable end-of-life options locally”.

Councillor B Magee spoke of the environmental impacts of traditional burials and cremations and referred to the burial capacity within the Council area. She outlined the ways in which natural burials could be considered, alluded to their benefits and how those sites could be marked. Councillor Magee acknowledged that burials were deeply personal and should be discussed in a compassionate way. She stressed that her Notice of Motion did not seek to put an end to traditional burials or cremation. It was not committing the Council to anything other than exploring the feasibility of natural burials. It was important to create a

3.1 Notice of Motion – Climate Friendly Burials (Contd)

personal choice for individuals; many people who had been passionate about the environment during their lives may wish to extend that after their passing.

Councillor J Bamford stated that it was important to have a discussion around environmental and land capacity issues. The Notice of Motion recognised the need for greater personal choice. This was a sensitive issue and Councillor Bamford reiterated that the Notice of Motion did not seek to end traditional practices.

Following discussion, it was agreed to recommend that the Notice of Motion be approved, with Officers taking account of several points made by Members, as follows:

- this matter required to be dealt with in a sensitive manner;
- it was important that burial sites be documented and that there was a physical marker of where a burial took place in order that family members and friends had a place to come and visit;
- where burials took place in a forestry setting, there was a potential for damage to be caused by machinery; and
- costs required to be considered and traditional burial methods should not be priced out by natural alternatives.

4. Report by Head of Service (Building Control and Sustainability)

4.1 LCCC Draft Response to the DAERA Climate Action Plan 2023-2027 Consultation

Members had been furnished with a copy of the Council's draft response to the above consultation. The Head of Service pointed out that the Committee had been granted delegated authority to approve the draft response, subject to any further comment, for submission to the Department by 8 October, 2025.

At the request of Councillor G Hynds, the Head of Service agreed to emphasise in the Council response, the need for wider engagement with the public and local businesses.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor P Catney and seconded by Councillor R McLernon that the draft response be approved and that each political party also submit their individual responses to the consultation document by 8 October, 2025.

It was proposed by Councillor C McCreedy and seconded by Councillor A Gowan that the Council would not submit a response but that political parties could submit their individual responses to the consultation document by 8 October, 2025.

The proposal in the name of Councillor P Catney was put to the meeting and, on a vote being taken, was declared 'carried', the voting being 10 in favour and 6 against.

4.2 LCCC Draft Response to the DAERA Consultation on the Setting of Northern Ireland's Fourth Carbon Budget (2023-2042)

The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman A Grehan, left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (6.55 pm), as did Councillor A Gowan (6.56 pm).

It was proposed by Councillor D Bassett, seconded by Councillor P Catney and agreed to recommend that approval be given to the Council's draft response to the above consultation and that it be submitted to the Department by the closing date of 17 November, 2025.

4.3 The Climate Changes (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (NI) 2024

It was proposed by Councillor P Catney, seconded by Councillor D Bassett and agreed that the update in respect of the above Regulations be noted.

4.4 Dual Language Street Naming Requests

Councillor A Gowan returned to the meeting during consideration of this item of business (7.02 pm).

The Head of Services having responded to a number of Members' queries regarding the Council's Street Naming and Postal Numbering Policy, it was proposed by Councillor P Catney, seconded by Councillor D Bassett and agreed to recommend that the update in respect of 2 applications that had been received to have existing street names also expressed in Irish be noted.

Alderman J Tinsley requested that the report that would come back to Committee provide information in respect of the total cost involved, including Officers' time.

5. Report by Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk and Emergency Planning)

5.1 Food Control Service Plan 2025-2026

It was proposed by Councillor C McCreedy, seconded by Councillor P Catney and agreed that the Food Control Service Plan 2025-2026 be noted. Both Members commended Officers for the work they undertook to keep food standards high.

5.2 Consultation on Local Authority and District Councils' Guidance on Grey Market Goods in the UK

It was proposed by Councillor P Catney, seconded by Alderman J Baird and agreed to recommend that the Council's draft response to the above consultation be approved and submitted to the Food Standards Agency by the closing date of 24 October, 2025. The Food Standards Agency would be advised that the response was subject to ratification by Council at its meeting on 28 October, 2025.

5.3 Consultation Response on Proposed Dilapidation Bill

Councillor N Parker left, and returned to, the meeting during consideration of this item of business (7.20 pm and 7.23pm respectively).

Members had been furnished with a copy of the Council's draft response to the above consultation. The Head of Service pointed out that the Committee had been granted delegated authority to approve the draft response for submission to the Department by 10 October, 2025.

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor G Hynds and agreed that approval be given to the Council's response and that it be submitted to the Department by the deadline.

Councillor G Hynds requested that the response make reference to the Bill being weak in respect of heritage and conservation buildings and could lead to demolition or inappropriate actions taken against them.

In advance of consideration of confidential business, the Chair, Alderman O Gawith, advised that Any Other Business would be considered at this stage.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Update Regarding Bins Councillor C McCready

In response to a query by Councillor C McCready, the Director of Environmental Services advised that the first order of 4 RCVs should be delivered imminently. The outcome of the consultation currently with the Executive would inform what the Council's model for kerbside recycling would look like going forward and that was not yet available. The Director assured Members that, whilst there was no definitive outcome of the consultation, Officers were endeavouring to pre-empt some of the information in order to be able to move forward at pace once the outcome was known.

In response to further comments by Councillor McCready, the Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk & Emergency Planning) advised that a new waste treatment contract had come into effect in February, which would be active for a number of years, with significantly less and potentially no Council waste going to landfill.

6.2 Dog Poo Bags Councillor C McCready

In response to comments by Councillor C McCready, the Director of Environmental Services confirmed that, as agreed at last month's Committee meeting, distribution of dog poo bags by community groups was part of a suite of measures that would be considered to address environmental crime.

6.3 Dog Poo Bags Dispensers – Drumbo
Alderman J Baird

Alderman J Baird asked that Officers consider the provision of dog poo bag dispensers and bins at a new walking path around the newly developed trim trail around the football pitch in Drumbo.

6.4 Loose Coping Stones
Alderman J Baird

In response to a request by Alderman J Baird that action be taken to secure loose coping stones on a wall in Drumbo that had been built as part of the public realm scheme, the Director of Environmental Services confirmed that she was aware of this matter. There was some obscurity over who owned the foundations and who had carried out the work; however, she undertook to ascertain who would take responsibility for making the necessary repairs.

6.5 Transportation of Waste
Councillor P Catney

Councillor P Catney referred to a current planning application at Tullynacross Road relating to a free-range poultry shed. He pointed out that he was a Member of the Planning Committee and had removed himself from consideration of this application. He voiced his concerns regarding the proposal that poultry waste would be transported along the small country roads in the vicinity of Tullynacross Road for disposal at a farm in Sligo. The Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk & Emergency Planning) explained that the Environmental Health Unit was a statutory consultee on planning applications. He confirmed that he would be content to engage with both residents and Elected Members regarding their concerns in respect of this application.

6.6 Noise Complaints
Councillor A Gowan

Councillor A Gowan referred to earlier media coverage regarding a noise complaint that had been made against an establishment in the Council area. At his request, the Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk & Emergency Planning) outlined the procedure followed by Environmental Health Officers upon receipt of a noise complaint and what constituted a noise nuisance. Officers took note of a suggestion by Councillor Gowan that it would be useful if more information was made available on the Council's website and social media platforms to better inform the public of the processes followed regarding noise complaints.

6.7 Car Parking in December and January
Councillor N Parker

Further to comments by Councillor N Parker, the Director of Environmental Services confirmed that there was already agreement in place, since 2023, that free car parking would be provided in the Council's off-street car parks each Saturday in December on an annual basis in both Lisburn City Centre and Royal Hillsborough; however, a decision was required to be made regarding any similar

6.7 Car Parking in December and January (Contd)
Councillor N Parker

arrangement for January. Councillor Parker stated that she had asked previously that a report with statistical data from last year be presented to Members in order to ensure that any decision made was useful to businesses and shoppers in Lisburn so the most value was being provided. The Director understood that monitoring had been carried out and was to form part of the Car Parking Strategy, which was being led by the Regeneration and Growth Department, and that there would be further consultation. It was her understanding that the information that had been gathered had been inconclusive in terms of the benefits to businesses, particularly in terms of the extension of free parking into January.

Lengthy discussion ensued, following which it was proposed by Councillor C McCreedy, seconded by Councillor G Hynds and agreed to recommend that free parking in the Council's off-street car parks in Lisburn City Centre and Royal Hillsborough be extended to each Saturday in January 2026. Councillor N Parker put on her record her frustration that the information she had asked for previously had not been forthcoming.

In response to comments by Councillor Parker regarding signage to notify drivers that parking in the Council's off-street car parks was free during December and January, the Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk & Emergency Planning) advised that signs were to be put in place at each pay station, but undertook to ensure this was carried out.

7. Confidential Report by the Director of Environmental Services

The Chair, Alderman O Gawith, advised that the confidential report item would be dealt with "In Committee" 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 C McCreedy, seconded by Councillor R McLernon and agreed that the following matter 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 Council Chamber (8.10 pm). Councillor A Gowan also left the meeting at this point.

7.1 Resurfacing Works Programme Phase 2 – Business Case
 (Report will never be available)

It was proposed by Alderman J Baird, seconded by Councillor G Hynds and agreed to recommend that approval be given to the business case to enable progression of the procurement exercise for the Resurfacing Works Programme Phase 2.

7.1 Resurfacing Works Programme Phase 2 – Business Case (Contd)

The Head of Service (Environmental Health, Risk & Emergency Planning) agreed to provide Councillor J Bamford with information on how the RAG analysis was calculated.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor C McCready, seconded by Councillor P Catney, and agreed to come out of Committee and normal business was resumed.

The Chair, Alderman O Gawith, thanked Members for their attendance.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.15 pm.

Chairperson